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FINLAND

THE LAND OF A THOUSAND LAKES



ERNEST YOUNG

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**FINLAND : THE LAND
OF A THOUSAND LAKES**

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TO VIND
ABSTRACTION



A FINNISH STREAM

[Frontispiece]

FINLAND: THE LAND OF A THOUSAND LAKES

BY

ERNEST YOUNG

AUTHOR OF "THE KINGDOM OF THE YELLOW ROBE"

WITH THIRTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

UNTIL recent years, singularly little has been written about Finland, either for the pleasure of the general reader or the use of the casual visitor. And of the works that have seen the light in the last two or three years, large parts of them, if not the whole, are filled with descriptions, often excellent and faithful, of those parts of the country seen by the writer, or of personal experiences of travel.

On my first visit to Finland I constantly felt the need of some book of general information that would clear up many puzzling points connected with the history and customs of the people. How were the thousands of lakes that one meets with everywhere formed? What was the origin of the curious ridges that are so marked a feature in the landscape? Who was Duke Carl, the central figure in one of Edelfelt's pictures, and why is he pulling the beard of the dead man in the coffin? Who built the castles and why? What did the men do in whose honour one finds that public statues have been erected?

This book is an attempt to supply a brief but accurate work of reference which will put the traveller in a position to profit by what he sees. It is with the possible traveller in my mind that I have chosen certain episodes, places

and legends for mention, rather than others that might have been selected had the book been written for other purposes. At the same time the general reader, who has never visited, and perhaps never intends to visit Finland, has not been lost sight of, and hence anything like a guide-book arrangement has been deliberately discarded.

I have quoted largely from the national epic the *Kalevala*, used illustrations by Finnish artists and extracts from Finnish authors, all with the idea of putting the reader in as close a touch as possible with the atmosphere of a singularly interesting country.

I am much indebted to the publishers of *Finland in the Nineteenth Century* for permission to make whatever use I pleased of that valuable but generally inaccessible volume.

The quotations from the *Kalevala* are, unless otherwise indicated, from Mr. Kirby's translation, published in Dent's *Everyman Library*, and are here reproduced by the courtesy and kindness of the author and publishers.

For some of the facts in the account of a Finnish wedding I am indebted to the proprietors of *The Wide World Magazine*, who allowed me to make use of them.

Portions of several of the chapters have previously appeared in the *Tramp*, *Country Life*, *The Railway Magazine*, *The Field*, *The Scottish Field*, and *Travel and Exploration*.

I have to thank the Finnish Tourist Society for the loan of all the photos that are not of my own taking, and for much valuable assistance in the collection of information, and, finally, I would like to say that if this book be free from those errors that are usually to be found in an account of any country written by one who is not a

native of the land described, all the credit must be given to Madame Aino Malmberg, who has helped me with the proofs, cut out my out-of-date statements, corrected my spelling and supplied me with much of what I hope, for the sake of Finland, will prove of interest to the reader.

E. Y.

THE SAVAGE CLUB,
December 1911.

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FINLAND

THE LAND OF A THOUSAND LAKES

CHAPTER I

THE COUNTRY

FEW countries have received so many names as Finland. The most common one, the name chosen as the title of this book, is Finland, that is, Fen-land, the land of fens and marshes. The Finnish name is Suomi, which also means a region of swamps. Because of its sheets of water Finland has been called the "Land of a Thousand Lakes"; "Strawberry Land" is an indication of its bountiful possession of a supply of this delicious fruit; "Land of Heroes" is a reminder of its gallant struggle to preserve its independence; while the "Last Born Daughter of the Sea" refers to the date of its uplifting above the waters of the ocean. Each of these names might well be made the title of a chapter, and round it might be grouped much information regarding the past and present history of the land.

A glance at a map of Europe will show that the Grand-Duchy of Finland is situated in the north-west corner of the Russian Empire. Its most southerly port, Hangö, is in about the same latitude as the most southerly part of the Shetland Isles, while the port of Uleåborg is in about the same latitude as the centre of Iceland. There are people who have imagined that on account of this northerly

situation, Finland is a barren wilderness of ice and snow, where the people are clad in furs and move everlastingly on snow-shoes. This idea is, during the summer at any rate, a wholly false one, for during that season the heat at midday is intense, raspberries and strawberries grow wild over hundreds of square miles, the air is filled with the scent of the pine and the whispering of the birch leaves, and the ground is covered with a carpet of brightly tinted flowers.

Finland has an area about equal to that of England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland and Belgium combined. It is over a thousand miles in length but nowhere more than five hundred miles broad. It is but thinly peopled; in 1907 there were only about three millions of inhabitants, and that means a population of only twenty people to the square mile. The population of Helsingfors, the capital, numbers 140,000; the old capital Åbo has 48,000, and there are eight towns each having a population exceeding 10,000. The Finns are dwellers in the forests and the fields, not dwellers in towns.

The boundaries of the country on the west and the south are respectively the Gulfs of Bothnia and Finland. Elsewhere the frontiers march with those of Russia. The Gulf of Bothnia is a great shallow inland sea, whose depth decreases as we pass from the south to the north. It possesses no tide, but its waters sometimes rise and fall according to the direction of the prevailing winds. It receives some 250 rivers, and owing to the fact that the supply of fresh water is so great, while the loss by evaporation during the long winter is so small, the waters of this gulf are practically fresh. On its shores stand the capitals of Sweden and Denmark and over forty ports of com-

mercial importance. Thousands of trading vessels of all sizes navigate the island-strewn waters and facilitate the interchange of commodities between various countries. The Gulf of Finland is also tideless and fresh, and also serves as a means of communication between two capitals—those of Finland and Russia—and the oceans of the world.

The coasts of Finland closely resemble those of Sweden, in their numerous indentations and their fringing islets. In the Gulf of Bothnia the indentations are fewer and more even than they are in the Gulf of Finland. The islands are the first of the natural wonders that burst upon the visitor as he gets near to the Finnish coast. His first feeling is one of admiration at their beauty and variety, his second, one of wonder as to how they came there.

Thirty miles away from the mainland numerous small rocky islands appear in view. At first they are rounded blackened masses of granite glistening in the sunlight like the backs of some strange denizens of the deep. As one gets nearer to the mainland these islands increase in size, their ruggedness often suggesting extremes of desolation. They are of all sizes; some are as bare as your hand while others may be clothed to the water's edge. Here and there a solitary tree may be found, quietly defying the wind and the wave, a fitting type of the sturdy self-reliant people who inhabit the land. Behind all stretches a belt of green which is not the forest of the mainland but a perfect maze of tree-clad islands. All along the south coast of Finland lies this bewildering and fascinating tangle of waterways and rocks. Every turn of the steamer seems to be leading to a landlocked bay which

is found later to be but the entrance to another bit of fairyland where the mirror of the waters, unruffled by the wind, reflects with wonderful intensity the strong colouring of the scene.

The multitudinous channels which intersect such an archipelago or skerry, require expert pilots. The landscape itself offers but few salient points by which to steer. Here a village or factory is of use, there a church with a belfry, but generally the fairway is marked with buoys and beacons, lighthouses, seamarks, and landmarks painted on cliffs, and with all these the navigator needs his wits about him if he would not lose his course amidst the maze of isles and islets, rocks and headlands, bays and inlets, that pass in endless procession before him.

This multitude of rocks, bare and grey, green with lichen or clothed with luxuriant foliage, these islands frowning and rugged, or beautiful as bits of fairyland, have all been brought into being by the slow upheaval of the land. Finland rose and continues to rise out of the waters of the Baltic. Far beneath the surface of the earth, forces of immeasurable magnitude are silently raising this part of the land-mass higher and higher above the surface of the waves. No volcanic disturbances hasten the process, no floods of lava pour their devastating streams athwart the land; only an occasional and trifling earthquake tells of the omnipotent hands that have lifted and are still lifting the Scandinavian lands. Sweden and Finland rest upon one plateau, and as this plateau is gradually elevated, fresh rocks and islands come into view. The elevation is not proceeding at a uniform rate throughout the area of disturbance, the process being most rapid at the northern end of the Gulf of Bothnia,

where it is as much as from three to four feet in a hundred years. The existence of the phenomenon has been known for centuries, but measurement of the movement is recent and incomplete. One hundred and fifty years ago, marks were made on certain rocks, and it is from the rise of these marks above the sea-level that the rate of elevation has been determined. There are other evidences available besides the direct measurements of the scientists. At the base of many rocky islands there is a mark, like that left by the retreating tide, marking distinctly a difference of nearly two feet between the present and recent levels. Remains of Viking ships and the fossilised bones of mammoth animals have been found inland on the summits of the hills.

As the land rises the sea recedes, the shores are laid bare and the slope of the land from the north to the south increases. Where ships once sailed, there is now hardly enough water to float a canoe, and cows may be found grazing on a strip of greensward where once the fisher cast his nets. Shallows and submarine rocks that are not marked on the maps and charts come into view, and it was on such a new-born rock that the Tsar's yacht was wrecked outside Hangö only so recently as the autumn of 1907. The shallow places become islets which grow into islands, and, after a further lapse of time, are often united to the mainland. There is continual increase in the width of the shores, and a continual decrease in the depth of the harbours, so that from time to time the seaports have to be removed to catch the retreating ocean. And so, while the sea is working its destructive will in many other parts of the globe, here it is being conquered by the land, and not a century goes by that

does not see fresh tracts of land suitable for cultivation added to the Finnish mainland, new islands to the myriads of those that bewilder the traveller through the Finnish skerries.

A map of Finland shaded so as to show the relief of the land brings out certain distinct features which it is well to bear in mind in traversing the country. Bordering on the sea-coast there is everywhere a narrow plain whose average height is under 400 feet. In places there are a few isolated hills but there are no mountains. Further inland there is a wide-spreading plateau of granite, studded with innumerable lakes, the average height of the plateau being between 400 and 600 feet. Farther north and to the north-east the hills are higher, the lakes fewer, and the forests more numerous. The lake waters are drained to the sea by countless streams, that, in descending from the plateau to the coastal plain, form a number of rapids, some of which are amongst the chief scenic attractions of the country.

Ages ago, long before the time of the Ice Age, the hills of Finland were much higher than they are now, but the action of torrential rains, powerful rivers and other equally potent influences, continued through centuries, served to wear these hills and mountains to a lower level, and what we see to-day are nothing but the remnants of ancient mountain ranges. Nowhere is there a mountain or a range of strikingly high hills to form a background to the sweeping areas of lake and forest land. Sometimes the granite foundations of the vanished ranges are concealed beneath the earth, sometimes they appear as wide expanses of bare and polished rock, and sometimes they rise in low undulating ridges intercepted by glens, moors,

and morasses. The highest hill in Finland only measures 858 metres. The relatively high land is in the north-east, and from thence the country slopes southwards and westwards down to the coast, where it disappears under the surface of the sea. In its granite formations, its indented lakes, and its rocky basins filled with water, Finland resembles Sweden; in its absence of mountains it resembles the plains of Russia.

As a result of the absence of hills it is difficult, unaided, to obtain views over wide tracts of country. But the Finns, who are an intensely practical people, have dotted the land with view-towers. These are placed on bits of rising ground and are built high enough to enable the visitor to look out over the world beyond. The most famous of the view points is at Kuopio, in the heart of the lake district, where the Puijo hill rises 754 feet above sea-level. From the round stone tower upon the summit one of the finest panoramic views in Finland is obtainable, a panorama in silver and green, bounded by a ridge of sombre pines, whose outlines soften and glow at the sunset hour when the whole expanse is bathed in the rose and gold, the green and the amber that never fail on the summer evening. The people of Kuopio are as proud of Puijo as if they had built it, and it is said that the inhabitants look with a mixture of anger and contempt on any visitor who dares to stay three hours in their little town without going to see their special view.

Finland being so rich in ancient rocks it might have been supposed that she would have been rich in mineral wealth, but this is not the case.¹ There is no coal or oil; limestone is only found at a few places, chiefly in the north-

¹ In October 1911 the discovery of copper was reported.

east, and the one and only form of mineral wealth that the hand of Nature has lavishly scattered is granite, which exists everywhere, and which is to be found in all its forms. The finest supply comes from Nystadt, where a special form of white granite is obtainable. The abundance and cheapness of granite have led to its extensive use in recent years as a building material, and the progress of almost any town is indicated by the extent to which stone is replacing wood for houses, shops and public buildings. There is so much granite in the land that it would be possible to rebuild the whole of London with Finnish supplies without materially affecting the present or future needs of the Finns themselves. In country places even the pigs and cows are indulged with granite shelters. There is no great export of this stone to other lands, the cost of transport swallowing up all the profits. One of the few places outside the Russian Empire where Finnish granite can be seen is at Les Invalides in Paris, where Napoleon sleeps under a block hewn from a Finnish cliff.

A certain quantity of marble has been exported, chiefly to Russia, where Peter the Great used it in the construction of St. Petersburg. The Isaacs Cathedral, the Marble Palace and the Palace of Gatchina in that city are all built of a curiously marked marble obtained from some quarries near Sortavala.

The arrangement of the land as an inland plateau with a narrow coastal plain has resulted in a series of unnavigable rivers, the descent from the plateau to the plain being marked with innumerable rapids. Where the rivers connect lakes, or where they swell out themselves to form lakes, they are of some use for navigation,



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THE MANKALA RAPIDS

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but nowhere can a vessel penetrate far inland from the sea. But if the rivers render small service to the mariner they offer great attractions to the traveller. In their rushing waters trout, salmon and other fish abound, while the beauty of the rapids is one of the things that it is worth journeying so far to see. Of these rapids two must be selected for special mention, the cataract at Imatra and the rapids of the Uleå River.

Imatra is within easy reach of both St. Petersburg and Helsingfors, and is crowded with visitors of many nationalities during the summer season. In south-western Finland there is a tangle of lakes, chief amongst which is the incomparable Saima. The whole of the waters in this basin are poured into Lake Ladoga, through a short river, the Vuoksi. Nearly five miles below the point where the river leaves the lake there is a drop of some sixty feet through a narrow gorge about half a mile in length. Big with the overflow of the Saima lake and its numerous allies the Vuoksi tears through this long narrow gorge and flings into waves of every shape and of rainbow hues a greater volume of water than passes over the Horse-shoe Fall at Niagara. Imatra is the Niagara of Finland the Mecca of all good Finns, the goal of all sensible visitors. The proud people in whose land this magnificent cataract is found, say, "We have three vast forests, three high mountains, and three mighty waterfalls; but there is only one Imatra." They are wrong about the high mountains but there is no mistake about Imatra. It is difficult to convey to the reader any proper sense of its majesty. A fall of sixty feet in half a mile is not much and the gorge is so narrow that you can throw a stone across it. But within this narrow passage there is a

tremendous depth of hissing, roaring, tormented waters dashing along like a troop of maddened horses. The noise is appalling and can be heard, under favourable circumstances, at a distance of five or six miles. At first it is heard as a low rumble; then it deepens to a prolonged moan, and as one nears the scene of the tumult it is the uproar of a great storm that knows no rest.

No photograph and no words can give any idea of the scene, for it is impossible to reproduce the roaring of the waters or the splendour of the jewelled mists that hang over the surface and of the columns of glittering foam that rise, sometimes to a height of twenty feet, as the maddened river tears its way down the slope. Masses of swirling treacherous green dash themselves against the rocks and break into cascades of sparkling diamonds. The dark pines bend over to listen to the tumult, and the boulders shiver again under the force of the impact. The water never rests, never subsides; and, beautiful as it all is, it is still more terrible as a type of the cruel, pitiless destructive forces of unrestrained nature. Its grandeur suggests violence, its still backwaters treachery and death. The river becomes more peaceful where it expands, seems even to wear a cruel smile of contentment, as if satisfied with its powers for ill. Another hundred yards or so and it breaks into bigger wavelets, chuckling and crowing like the very incarnation of evil.

You turn away your eyes to the trees and the rocks upon the banks, almost glad to give them some repose after the bewildering, dazzling, tormented, writhing mass of foam. There are the companions of the stream, motionless and silent, living their lives peacefully and patiently, undisturbed, unhindered, on the very brink of destruction.

Just as you are making up your mind to depart, a mass of water dashes against a rock and is hurled back to meet the galloping billows from behind. In the conflict, walls and pillars of water are ceaselessly shattered into foam, and then rise and fall, form and reform, as they hurry madly to the open space beyond.

The State, with praiseworthy foresight, has purchased the banks of the river so that they may be for ever preserved as open spaces. She levies no contributions on the tourist, harasses him with no regulations, leaves him free to wander and to feast his eyes at will. One could wish, however, that she had not built a big hotel and a bridge where they do much to detract from the beauty of the surroundings. The Cascade Hotel is typically Finnish in its architecture, but might well have been placed a mile away. It has been leased to suitable tenants and is "replete with every luxury," with prices in harmony with the luxuries. This hotel is crowded through the summer and the winter months with visitors, the majority of whom are probably Russians. In the evenings of the winter days they get a certain amount of amusement by watching the flashing of artificially coloured lights as they are thrown across the white foam-crested billows.

The fall is crossed by a light ironwork bridge, which again would have been better a mile away. It is said that formerly tourists were pulled across the stream in a basket, and that on one occasion an English traveller was suspended over the dizzy height for two hours owing to some disarrangement of the mechanism. The bridge is not absolutely ugly—there is nothing absolutely ugly in Finland—but, like the hotel, the little wooden pavilions on the banks, the electric power station, and the artificial

lights, it is out of harmony with a scene that is of striking natural beauty.

About four miles further down the Vuoksi there are the smaller rapids of Vallinkoski. After leaving the carriage in the main road you wander along a woodland path with the voice of the water calling to you through the silver pillars of the birch. About half way down the path "the first glimpse of Vallinkoski is obtained—a gleam of dancing waters sparkling in the sunlight and leaping over huge rocks of granite in their midst. To see Vallinkoski to its best advantage, you must go right down to the shore and look up and watch the waves come tumbling down. . . . If Imatra did not exist, Vallinkoski would be the most beautiful waterfall in Europe. The entire panorama is as perfect as anything can be in the world. There are no straight lines visible, and the width of the water in some places is so extensive that one cannot see distinctly the opposite shore. Some call Vallinkoski the dying struggle of Imatra, but to me it gave more the impression of new-born life. There is nothing death-like about those singing waves. They seem like the embodiment of eternal youth, as they come curving round that oblong island set in the midst of the waters like an oasis in the desert. Without that island, Vallinkoski would lose half its charms. It separates the smooth from the rough waters, as a shepherd would his sheep from his goats. Glorious waves of foam rushed past so close to where I was standing that the spray touched my face, yet on the other side of the island the water was as calm as a lake. To any one who has not seen it, it must appear an impossible freak of Nature. But the fact remains that on one side those waves would crush the

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TAR-BOATS

strongest man to pieces in a moment, while on the other a little girl could row up stream.

"Vallinkoski was radiant the day I saw it.

"Looking down the cataract one could see the current gradually narrow into a thread of foam until in the far distance it broke into countless specks, that rested on the motionless surface of the river like white water-lilies, that floated away towards the mists of the distant clouds, the strongholds of the banished gods, that still linger by the waves of the beautiful Vallinkoski."¹

The rapids of the Vuoksi are, of course completely unnavigable; those of the Uleå are not. Just as the Vuoksi carries away the surplus waters of a great lake system in the south-east and pours them through Lake Ladoga into the Gulf of Finland, so the Uleå River drains another but smaller lake system of the north-west into the Gulf of Bothnia. Although the rapids of the northern river are long and dangerous it is possible to descend them in narrow boats called "tar-boats." These are under the care and control of licensed pilots, who know every inch of the perilous waterway and have been bred to the work from their youth. The boats are between forty and fifty feet long and about three feet three inches wide. They are built after a pattern of immemorial antiquity and resemble in shape though not in dimensions the gondolas of Venice. Their narrowness allows of easy passage between the boulders. They are high peaked both fore and aft that they may not be driven below the water by the force of the current. Their sides are of planks of fir wood about three-quarters of an inch thick, and the consequent lightness and elasticity of the craft

¹ Paul Wainemann, *A Summer Tour in Finland*.

render them free from much danger in the case of accidental shock. No iron is used in the construction, and the planks are bound together with wooden fibres.

The tar-boats leave Vaala daily during the summer season. Those used by the tourist are provided by the Finnish Tourist Association. They are painted red and yellow, the national colours, and are comfortably cushioned. Only light luggage can be carried, as the boats are quite full enough and quite low enough in the water by the time the crew and passengers have taken their places. The crew consists of two men, one at the prow, rowing to keep the boat steady, and one in the stern who steers with a huge clumsy steering-oar. The greatest number of passengers that can be carried is twelve. The boat leaves Vaala about midday and makes its way peacefully to the other side of the lake where the first rapid commences. The current seizes the boat and down it shoots into the whirling waters within almost touching distance of the threatening blocks of granite. Every moment it seems as though the fragile craft would be dashed to pieces, but the pilot calculates each turn of the oar with perfect ease and security, and after a few moments of intense excitement smooth water is again reached and rowing is once more necessary. Another rapid is followed by another stretch of smooth water, and these experiences are repeated again and again till the last rapids, the Pyhäkoski or Sacred Rapids, are reached. These are twelve miles in length and the man who can go through them without a thrill must be about as unemotional as a dead toad. The journey takes only twenty minutes, but there is the possibility of death for every minute, and though accidents are of such rare occurrence

that the chance of being drowned may be almost neglected, still the fact remains that any indecision or miscalculation on the part of the steersman would mean the certain loss of the boat and of every one on board. You have only to catch a glimpse of the pilot's face to see that he will take no risks, and that he feels to the full the weight of his responsibilities. The velocity increases from minute to minute; the surface of the stream has a visible slope, it is as though a part of the Atlantic were rolling down an incline; logs of wood are thrust aside as they crash into the slender craft; the spray is dashed into your face; the wind blows the hair of the ladies and tries to dislodge the hats of the men; and then, just as you are about getting used to the whirling perilous pleasure of it all, the river makes a sudden bend, a rock impedes the passage, a whirlpool waits for you on the other side of the rock, and for once, you can scarcely resist the fear that soon all will be unpleasantly over. To avoid the barrier amidst this howling torrent of water and at this speed seems well-nigh impossible. The boatman leans upon his oar, and the boat makes straight for the cliffs as though purposely to dash itself to fragments. Almost as the nose of the boat touches the bank, the whole weight of the pilot is thrown on the pole and the craft sweeps lightly as a cork out into the mass of seething boiling foam that flings itself everlastingly from side to side in a mad and ceaseless passion of hate. When the Tsar Alexander I. was in the country in 1819 he expressed a wish to be taken through the Uleå rapids. The season was late, and the passage was more than usually dangerous. About half way down the first fall a storm arose and added its terrors to those of the roaring waters. The man at the oar turned visibly

pale and the Emperor asked, "Are you frightened"? "Only for your majesty," was the reply. "Then think that he is not with you. In danger all men are equal."

The situation of Finland, with its head away beyond the Arctic Circle, suggests a climate of intense cold, and in the winter the climate is certainly very severe. The effect of the high latitude is to some extent modified by other influences. The altitude of the country is low, so that there is no falling of temperature due to great elevation. The immense sheets of water with which the land is interlaced also play their part in modifying the temperature. On the east, towards Russia, where the great land mass is situated, the difference between the heat of summer and the cold of winter is much greater than on the west, where the sea, the warm west winds and the Gulf Stream Drift are able to make their influence felt. The highest temperature recorded is 86° F.; the lowest is -54.4° F. The winter sets in about November and lasts till April. During this period the ice fiend grips the land in unbreakable bands. Under the heavy covering of snow the flowers and the waters sleep their long cold winter sleep. Vegetation appears to be dead, but is not; animal life is in a dormant state; man alone seems to be endowed with new activities. The Gulf of Finland is blocked with ice for 150 to 170 days in each year; gates are removed lest they be buried in the snow; boats are taken from the lakes and housed, for they are no longer wanted. If the weather be very severe horses and carts can cross the Gulf of Finland and a post road over the ice is opened to Sweden. The ice is not a complete hindrance to navigation, though it builds mighty bridges from the islands to the mainland shores. Specially constructed steamers, assisted if necessary by ice-breakers,

keep communication open the whole winter with Stockholm and Copenhagen. The winter ports are Åbo and Hangö. The latter port was founded in 1878 when the increased trade of the country demanded some winter outlet. Here three of the most powerful ice-breakers in existence plough their way through ice that is often five feet thick. The winter visitor, as he threads the frozen passages of the archipelago, will see horses and sledges moving about in all directions, while immediately around him the ice is crushed under the weight of the vessel, and huge blocks of ice rise and fall in the dark green waters that open in the wake. It is at this time that out come the skates, the snow-shoes and the skis, and young men and maidens laugh at the cold, for their spirits are high and their blood is warm. There is little light in the skies. The sun is sometimes seen only for an hour or two, but there is light in the eyes of the merry young as they glide over land and water where winter has made for them hundreds and hundreds of miles of hard clean roads.

What a season of merriment is Christmas in this land of darkness and cold! Every cottage throughout the length and breadth of the land has its candle ready to be lighted on Christmas morning. Fresh straw is strewn over the cottage floor and corn and food are spread about the snow for the sparrows and the cattle. On Christmas Eve the tongues of the dumb are loosed and the animals speak. It is even possible, if you but listen with sufficient intensity, to hear what they say as they accept your offering. The presents, which Christmas brings in every Christian land, are here wrapped in paper, and the name of the recipient, with perhaps a verse of poetry, is written on the outside of the packet. When all the family is

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gathered in the appointed room some one outside flings the gifts in one at a time, calling the name of the person for whom that gift is intended. Even the dog is not forgotten, and responds with furious barking to the invitation to consume the lump of meat that he must first extract from its paper wrapper. The festive supper of this festive evening consists of four dishes, a fish and a tart that have no equivalent English names, rice-porridge and pork.

Church begins early on Christmas morning at five, six, or seven o'clock, and all who are able make their way in sledges to the church, which is brilliantly illuminated with candles. Tinkling sleigh bells, booming bells of the church, hoar-frost below, bright stars above, laughter everywhere—the days of cold are forgotten, the hours of darkness unremembered. When the service in the church is over, there is a rush back to the warm fireside, to the Christmas tree with its tinsel ornaments and fruit, and to the Christmas dinner, which does not possess so fixed a constitution as the supper eaten on Christmas Eve. Ham and green peas are, however, favourite delicacies on this occasion.

May and June are the spring months, July and August those of summer. Summer sometimes sets in rapidly in a few days, though sometimes it is preceded by a long transition period of varying weather. The ice breaks up, and with the death of the cold comes a sudden awakening of life. New shades of green are seen on the fir-trees, showers of green spray fall from the branches of the birches, the ground is covered with the greenest of grass, dog-daisies, campions and blue-bells in wondrous colours and wide spreading masses fight with the green verdure for a breathing space; ferns spring into life; mosses put

forth new leaves ; mushrooms tower rapidly aloft ; dragonflies and butterflies flit gaily past—the time of the warm long days has come. Only on the south coast is there, for three months, even a sign of twilight. In the far north, for a much longer period there is no night at all. Its place is taken by the pale light that offers so strange a phenomenon to the dweller in the south. If the sky be unclouded, shadows will be seen pointing to the *south* ; if clouds cover over the heavens the landscape stands out without shadows at all, clear and sharp under the effect of this weird illumination. There is no one point from which the light can be said to come ; it comes from all points. A newspaper can be read at midnight and one goes to bed without the help of candle or of lamp. And the spirit of it all is peace. Away in the depths of the forest with the silver light of the lake surface glistening amongst the trees and the silver light of the unclouded sky peeping in between the foliage above, there comes a feeling of awe and mystery. It is as though one were within hearing of Nature's secrets, as though one's most aerial dreams were about to be materialised. It is unreal, uncanny. You are in the land of dreams, or shall we say, rather, in the land of deepest realities, where every whisper of the rustling leaves has a message, every ripple on the water a suggestion of eternal rest.

Owing to the length of the day the ground has no time in which to radiate away its heat, and vegetable life develops with magic speed. " The intervals between seed and stalk, blossom and fruit, make up one long day, and when it has passed, when the first star begins to twinkle in the evening sky the fruit is ripe for harvest." ¹

¹ Topelius, in *Finland in the Nineteenth Century*.

As there is an essentially Christian festival in the depth of winter, so there is an essential pagan one in the middle of summer. On June 24th, St. John's Day, is celebrated the greatest festival of the year. On St. John's Eve bonfires (*kokko*) are lighted on hill-tops, on the shores of the waters, on capes and islands, on rafts and floats. All night long the village boys and girls go dancing and singing round the bonfires. Everywhere is there music and making merry. Houses are decorated with birch both inside and out, and boughs of mountain-ash are stretched from house to house, from lamp-post to lamp-post. There is feasting and story-telling, but no sleep. The proper dishes are creamy soup, cold salmon and all kinds of sweet cakes, and the viands are as busily attended to as the fires. It is many years ago since the custom began, long before the days of St. John.

It has a double origin. Amongst the Swedish-speaking Finns of the coast it is the festival of the ancient sun-god, and the fires that are lit in these modern times are but the descendants of those that the prehistoric ancestors of the people lit in days of yore to the honour of Balder the sun-god on the day when he stood highest in the heavens. Amongst the Finnish-speaking Finns it is a survival of the worship of a goddess Hela, and the fires are still called in some parts of the west Hela fires. Her festival was held at the beginning of the summer, usually about Whitsuntide, but in these careless degenerate days either Whitsuntide or St. John's Day serves the purpose. Thus the whole population of a land that prides itself on progress turns out once a year to worship the sun or some other deity, generally without knowing it; they would doubtless continue the practice, and rightly, even if they did know.

One would not wish them to throw down the flower-decked pole that stands in field or farmyard, to strip off the sprigs of birch and mountain-ash from their walls, or to leave off firing their guns in the clear night air. And besides, this is the season for lovers. For on this one night, maidens tender and coy steal secretly to the rye field and twine coloured wools around the stiff stalks of the rye, one colour for joy, one for sorrow, another for love and another for hate. At the proper time they steal back to the field to fathom the future, for if the colour for joy has out-topped the others then assuredly will joy come to the fair one in the ensuing year, but evil is in store for her whose sorrow colour has climbed the highest.

September and October are the autumn. "One breath of the north wind, one night of the ravaging frost and the dying vegetation clothes itself in its gayest colours for a last farewell. Night darkens; the leaves fall; the firwood alone stands green among the general decay.

"Sometimes winter casts its devastating shadow even in July or August. While the cornfields stand in their most luxuriant growth, sometimes when they are just beginning to bloom, the north wind arrives, to die away in the evening. Then the cloudless sky assumes a shade of green, the temperature falls steadily and destructive exhalations rise from the morass. At midnight the thermometer stands at freezing-point. At sunrise it shows two degrees of frost or even more. Each ear of corn is coated with a thin crust of ice, which in itself is comparatively harmless, but if a warm day succeeds this frost, the kernel of the ear is changed into a fluid perfectly innutritious, the mischief is done, and the hopes of the farmer are ruined for that year.

"The first decaying touch of autumn is followed in October by St. Bridget's Summer, by bright sunlight and invigorating autumn air, and after that come rain and fog, a clouded sky and pitch-dark autumn nights."¹

¹ Z. Topelius, in *Finland in the Nineteenth Century*.

CHAPTER II

THE LAKES AND RIDGES

MUCH that is characteristic of and charming in Finland is the result of the operation of the powerful natural forces that were brought to bear upon the surface of the land during that period of the world's history known to geologists as the Ice Age, an epoch when the climate of northern Europe was so cold that glaciers and ice-sheets extended as far south as Germany, and when the Irish and the North Seas were as choked with ice as the Polar Seas of to-day. Over Finland the sheet must have been between 6000 and 7000 feet thick. Dr. Mill remarks, "The ancient glaciers have left the marks of their passage engraved on the surface of the land, and the general forms of the country are everywhere due to glaciation. There are few better marked land surface features in the world than the parallel valleys which descend to the Gulf of Bothnia, both on the Finnish and Swedish sides, and the same phenomenon occurs in the interior. In many parts of the country the general alignment is of almost geometrical regularity; hills, lakes, marshes and chains of boulders run parallel to one another from north-west to south-east; and all public works, embankments, cuttings, lines of communication, even the streets of villages and of towns have necessarily to follow the same direction."

When the ice melted, the hollows that had been scooped out were filled with water, and the great boulders that had been carried on the surface of the ice were deposited all

over the land. There is no other part of Europe where erratic blocks abound to such an extent as they do in Finland, and many of these are so large that the peasants build houses in their shelter.

The exact number of lakes in Finland has never been computed, a statement that will be easily understood and credited by a momentary examination of any map, which shows a small portion of the lake system. The lakes of Finland are like the stars in the Milky Way, and the expression, "Land of a Thousand Lakes," is a gross underestimate. The country is one enormous collection of archipelagoes, deltas, lakes, isthmuses, and peninsulas. Finland has, in proportion to her size, one-third more water than Sweden, three and a half times more than Norway and Switzerland, eight times more than Russia in Europe, ten times more than Germany and Scotland, and nearly forty times more than Denmark, Austria, Hungary and France. Not only does water surround and traverse the land in all directions but it even sinks into it, forming extensive areas of bog and morass. A hundred years ago, these bogs and morasses covered over a quarter of the surface of the whole country; to-day they cover less than one-fifth. The diminution in the area of the fen-land is due partly to artificial drainage, and partly to that slow elevation of the land which we have already pointed out, and which is also responsible for a gradual diminution of the area of the lake surface. All the world over, the tendency is for lakes to disappear. Some lose their waters by evaporation, others get filled up with the mud and sand deposited by contributory streams, and here, in Finland, another destructive agency is at work, in the gradual upheaval of the lake bed.

There is considerable variety in the depths of the lakes, for while some are comparatively shallow, others are deeper than the seas that surround the coasts, and not a few, according to the peasants and the fishermen, are quite unfathomable.

In describing the waterways of most countries we have to take account chiefly of the river systems. Here, the place of the river is taken by the lake; it is lake systems, rather than river systems that are the predominant hydrographic features, and the function of the river is merely to connect the lakes one with another or with the sea. A river is "nothing but the last steps of a lake, which may be described as a sort of wanderer, its tendency to wander being revealed by a slight, but constant though often imperceptible current. It divides itself into branches, it narrows and widens again and flows now by a sound, now by a brook or rill, or a roaring torrent, into a neighbouring lake, until various lakes unite and find a channel to the sea. Sometimes the river is arrested by a chain of rocks, or a hill, or a moor, but if the vernal flood has made it strong enough, it forces its way through the impediment; if not, it takes a roundabout course or filters through the earth. From time to time the waters overflow their banks and alter the scenery of the neighbourhood." ¹

It is quite impossible to give, upon any map, an adequate idea of the number or the names of the thousands of lakes. These patches of water, varying in colour from dark black to velvety blue, here as clear as crystal, there discoloured by drainage from a neighbouring morass, constitute the despair of the Finnish geographer, and not less so, we may be sure, the despair of the Finnish child.

¹ Michelin.

The most important lake is Saima, which has been called the "Lake of a Thousand Islands," and which has no parallel in Europe. Many of the thousand islands are treeless lumps of rock; some are stranded little rosettes of juniper and alder, at whose feet the green bracken and the purple heather lay their tributes of bright and cheerful colour; and some are decked with bits of virgin forest, where the red of the pine and the silver of the birch bow peacefully in the passing breezes to their own bright reflections in the water that laps the shores.

A voyage through Finnish lake-land on a sunny day is an experience never to be forgotten. The air is laden with the sweet scent of the pine-trees and the flowers; the variety of form in land and water, rock and tree, is endless; flowers bespangle the banks; trees border the horizon in all directions.

"Pleasant 'tis in boat on water,
Swaying as the boat glides onward,
Gliding o'er the sparkling water,
Driving o'er its shiny surface,
While the wind the boat is rocking,
And the waves drive on the vessel,
While the west-wind rocks it gently,
And the south-wind drives it onward."

So sings the ancient bard, but the modern traveller does not journey in boats that are wind-driven, but in small steamers, which connect most points upon the shores of the lake-land. On Saima alone, vessels can travel a distance of 250 miles, and it is possible to go from Viborg on the Gulf of Finland to Iisalmi in the very heart of the country in a lake steamer. This latter journey occupies from two to three days and costs under fifteen shillings. As the boat winds its way in and out amongst the rocks

and islands, as it steams slowly through the channels marked with bobbing barrels, white poles, red flags, or whitewashed cairns, there passes, in one long and ever changing panorama, much that is typical of Finnish life and scenery. The speed is slow, for the stoppages are numerous. Every house seems to possess a private pier and some one waiting to embark. The public piers are often in charge of a young girl, who helps the sailors to moor the boat, to discharge and load their cargoes, and to cast off, with all the ease and more than the grace of the customary male. Where there are no piers, the boat anchors in the middle of the stream, while the passengers go to and fro in small boats.

The only fuel used is wood, and, as the logs are small and are passed singly from hand to hand, the work of loading is somewhat tedious. Peasants are occasionally given a free passage in return for services to be rendered later on in connection with the taking in of fuel. No one seems to mind the slowness of the journey, least of all the Finns themselves, whose national maxim, "God did not create hurry," must be a great consolation to them on many and varied occasions. And as for the traveller, the sooner will he learn true wisdom, the sooner he learns that what he sees will be in inverse ratio to the square of the speed at which he travels.

Wherever the steamer calls, a little crowd collects. You are crossing a stretch of sunlit silvery blue water, and making straight for a pine-framed doll of a bay. The landscape holds not a single home, and not a soul is in sight, though perchance a curl of smoke above the tree-tops may betray the presence of man. And yet, before you can throw your mooring-rope ashore, little children

are offering you berries in birch-bark baskets, old women are trying to sell you lace,¹ a student in regulation summer university cap has come to meet a friend, a father has arrived to welcome or be welcomed by his children. While you are wondering where they were all hiding when you crossed the waters, butter and eggs, fish and poultry, pass in and out of the vessel, perhaps a piano slides off on to the pier, boxes of eatables and drinkables and packages of wearables are handed over to expectant consignees, and long before you can guess rational answers to half the questions that the circumstances should call forth in any healthy inquisitive brain, everything has been swallowed up in the distance, and you are once more in the depths of that fairyland of green and blue and silver that the Finns love so devotedly, so that when of old they tempted the primæval hero Väinämöinen to stay in Pohjola where there was

"Salmon you can eat at table,
And beside it pork is standing,"

all the answer they got was—

"Foreign food I do not relish,
In the best of strangers' houses,
In his land a man is better,
In his home a man is greater,
Better is a man's own country,
Water from beneath the sabot,
Than in unfamiliar countries,
Mead to drink from golden goblet."

There is much to be seen and heard as you pass across the waters. There are mighty rafts of timber trailing

¹ Large quantities of Finnish lace are sold in England as *Venetian*. There has been quite a revival of the lace industry in recent years, but the finest thread used in its manufacture is imported from either England or Ireland.

sullenly behind the fiery noisy little steam-tugs, odd trunks of trees that will get into the screw and make you stop while the sailors fish them out with a boathook; men, women and children, fishing, washing, rowing, bathing. There is a medley of sounds, sounds widely different in character, yet which somehow, under the influence of the peace that ever broods over this land of many waters, mingle into a not inharmonious note. Many languages are being spoken round you, laughter and chattering come from all parts of the vessel, bells are tinkling in distant pastures, birds are calling, cattle lowing. Even the strident note of the saw-mill seems to blend with the lower and warmer tones of the melody, for there is something not altogether inappropriate in the triumphant song of the biting blades, as they make their way through the giant logs.

It was along these waterways that communication between the different parts of the country first took place, and they remain to this day the chief means of communication everywhere, especially in the north, during the summer, when the disappearance of the winter snows renders the use of sledges impossible. In the far north they are still the only routes existing, and it is over them that hundreds of people travel to the large fisheries on the coasts of the Polar Sea and the White Sea. The great hindrance to navigation was formerly the rapids, to which we have referred, and which are very numerous in many of the rivers. The people, however, soon learned to overcome this difficulty. In some places the boats are drawn overland, and experience has taught the art of travelling on streams where it is dangerous for any but the most expert to sail. Long lake journeys have only been

rendered possible by the construction of canals, which have proved the most important means of opening up the country and increasing the value of the forests and the land. The canals are of all sizes, the one at Kaivanto in Kangasala is only a dozen yards long; the Saima Canal, on the other hand, has a length of nearly forty miles.

Before the construction of the Saima Canal, the whole of the extensive system of lakes in the south-east, covering one-sixth of the total area of Finland, was shut off from the sea by the rapids of the Vuoksi. The attention of engineers was early directed towards the problem of linking the waters of the interior with those of the gulf, but all kinds of difficulties presented themselves, and for many years their efforts met with little success.

The lake-level was 256 feet above that of the gulf, and the intervening country was a solid block of granite. The total distance along the suggested route was thirty-seven miles, of which seventeen miles were provided by a chain of small lakes. The work was carried out by Nils Ericson, a brother of the inventor and engineer who built the *Monitor* and invented the screw. Under his supervision the granite was cut through, and the difference in the levels overcome by means of twenty-eight locks. It is probable that such a gigantic undertaking would never have been carried out had it not been for the interest displayed in it by Nicholas I. The work occupied eleven years and cost the comparatively trifling sum of half a million sterling. The canal has long since proved a paying concern. Thousands of vessels pass through it every year—nearly 9000 in 1904—and the annual working shows a clear and substantial profit. In other parts of the country, similar but less important works have been

constructed, and the total amount spent up to 1902 amounted to over a million sterling, a large sum for a country with a population of only three millions.

The word "canal" to an Englishman usually suggests a variety of things, mostly unpleasant, but the Saima Canal is almost as beautiful as though Nature herself had made it. The minimum breadth is thirty-nine feet, but there is no uniformity in this respect, and the silver ribbon now widens as it enters a lake, now narrows again as it passes through a gorge. There are rapid changes of colour from red rocks to green trees, from brown log-huts to flower-bespangled emerald glades. There are reminders of the past rulers in the two obelisks carved with the names of the Tsars Nicholas I, under whom the canal was commenced, and Alexander II, in whose reign it was completed, and there is at least one natural feature that will appeal to the lovers of the romantic. This is a little island in one of the lakes, where, on one moonlit summer eve, two young lovers sought the seclusion that young love pines for in its initial stages. While they were engaged in plighting their troth and sealing their vows, a storm arose that swept their boat adrift and prevented their return home. Few people passed that way, and no one heard their cries. When, after many days, they were at last discovered, they were fast asleep in each other's arms in the sleep that knows no waking. All this happened in the days before the canal came, with its bustling steamers, lumbering timber barges and tourists from all parts of the world.

One native legend, too, has found a home in this neighbourhood, for it was here, so runs the story, that Vulcan and Neptune quarrelled and fought for overlordship.

And because neither would submit to the other, and neither could conquer the other, they proclaimed a truce, agreeing that Neptune should have three-quarters of the globe over which to exercise his authority, but that the waters of Saima should be for ever sealed up out of his reach. And now, after all these centuries, a Swedish engineer and half a million of money have rendered the treaty ineffective, and old Neptune chuckles to himself with glee, as he sees the vessels pass from the gulf to the thousand lakes.

After the islands and the lakes, the next most striking feature of the country is a number of narrow ridges which separate the lakes. They are usually narrow and fairly straight, and have the appearance of artificial embankments. They are used as roadways, and have also been utilised by the railways. They are so narrow that the trains, when seen from a distance, appear to be travelling over the surface of the lake itself. When I first approached an English geographer and asked him for an explanation of their form and occurrence, he remarked, "Do they really exist like that? I have often noticed them on Finnish maps, but they appeared so straight and regular, that I took them for mistakes or inventions on the part of the cartographer." They are, however, real enough, and are known to the geologist under the name of *esker*, *kame*, or *asar*. As already pointed out, their general character is that of long, narrow, steep-sided mounds of sand and gravel. They are only found in countries which have, in recent geological times, been covered by a great ice-sheet. Excellent examples are found not only in Finland, but also in Scotland, Ireland and North America. The British examples are usually only twenty to forty

feet in height, but the Scandinavian ones are frequently over a hundred and fifty feet high. When the land was buried under the ice, there existed a number of glacial rivers which flowed in tunnels at the bottom of the glaciers. As they ran along in their crystal caverns, they rolled and tumbled the stones about as rivers do to-day, polishing their surfaces, rounding off their corners, and forming deposits of sand and gravel at their mouths. As the ice melted, filling up the hollows with water and forming the lakes, the mouth of the river retreated, and the terminal deposit followed it, thus producing, in the course of several centuries, the long banks of which we are speaking. The layers of sand and stones commonly dip downwards on each side, parallel to the surface of the ridge. Often the *eskers* of a district form a branching system, like the tributaries and the main channel of a river.

The three most noted of the Finnish ridges are all in the south. They are Punkaharju, in the neighbourhood of Nyslott, Pyynikki at one end of the town of Tammerfors, and Kangasala, not far from the village of the same name. There are scores of others of less repute, but not of less beauty, in other places. Punkaharju is a high narrow ridge, four miles long, but so narrow that from the road which runs along the top of the ridge, a stone can be thrown into the clear waters which lap the steep pine-covered shores on either side. Lovely views of the islands which thickly dot the surrounding lakes are to be seen to right and left. The Government, with praiseworthy foresight, has purchased the land in order to preserve it as a national open space for ever. They have taken care of the forest, built a hotel in a place where it is useful and not too obtrusive, and bridged over two of

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the three gaps that break the continuity of this curious natural formation. At various spots, trees have been skilfully removed so as to open up long vistas of lake and island that would otherwise have been completely hidden from view.

It is in such places as these that one realises where the makers of the Finnish epic obtained the pictures of the woods and waters, such as the one which is contained in the appeal of one of the heroes of the story to the Gracious Mistress of the Forest.

“ All the aspens robe in greyness,
And the alders robe in beauty,
Clothe the pine-trees all in silver,
And with gold adorn the fir-trees.
Aged pine-trees belt with copper,
Belt the fir-trees all with silver,
Birch-trees with their golden blossoms,
And their trunks with gold adornments.
Make it as in former seasons
Even when the days were better,
When the fir-shoots shone in moonlight,
And the pine-boughs in the sunlight,
And the wood was sweet with honey,
Smelt like malt the heathland's borders
From the very swamps ran butter.”

The Pyynikki ridge is at Tammerfors, and being close to a big town of 45,000 inhabitants, is a favourite resort of the people on Sundays. From the summit of the inevitable view-tower is seen the usual panorama of lake and forest, while underneath the trees, a hundred paths lead up and down to shady glens.

The Kangasala ridge is almost as famed in song and story as that of Punkaharju. It is reached from Tammerfors by taking the train to Kangasala and then driving in one of the numerous vehicles that are always to be



VIEW FROM THE PUNKAHARJU RIDGE



TAR-BOAT

[To face p. 34]

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found waiting at the little railway station. The village nestles at the foot of the hills, with the lake in front and the old church at the back. Gustavus III of Sweden was so delighted with the view from one of the higher points of the ridge, that he exclaimed, " Surely it was here that the devil tempted our Lord, when he showed Him all the glory of the world." To those of us who look for the sublime grandeur of the soaring mountains to lend completeness to a landscape, such praise may perhaps appear extravagant, but there is no denying the abiding charm of Kangasala with its vistas of blue waters, its clear sweet-scented air, and its wonderful mosaic of berries and mosses, wild flowers, heather and fern.

By driving or walking a few miles, the hamlet of Kaivanto is reached, situated on the edge of a lake. Although the portion of the ridge near Kangasala is the one that has been most celebrated and is now most diligently advertised, yet the portion lying south of Kaivanto seems to me to be the more beautiful. By crossing the bridge over the canal, and scrambling up the steep bank, a track that lies along the summit is reached, and this track leads to a high point with a wooden view-tower.

As you pass along the footway, delightful glimpses of silver lake and emerald isle are caught between the tall uprights of the stately pines. Here and there are small lagoons where but rarely does man intrude, and where a sense of peace and security for ever broods over the surface of the waters. If you go at the evening hour, when the winds have died away, and the hush of departing day has fallen upon the earth, and when the clouds and the trees are mirrored in the unruffled waters, it will seem to you as if this very earth itself were but a symbol of some

other land where there is neither sorrow nor strife. And as the stronger light departs, and the white light of the evening takes its place, here and there is caught a peep of blue above or between the trees, but elsewhere, there is shady darkness, mystery and silence. So too, down by the lake side, in the cool of the day, everything speaks of the beauty of peace. The low hills on the other side, with their sky-line of pines and their red houses in green fields, suggest not grandeur, not magnificence, but quietness and rest. The silver mirror at your feet has none of the vastness or the terror of the waves; it just looks up to the pale and placid moon above, and to the silent trees that stand along its rim, and doubles their message of repose. So few people live here, and so few travellers pass this way, that you may lie here for hours, alone and undisturbed, revelling in the solitude, the temporary possessor of a region of almost unbroken calm.

CHAPTER III

THE FORESTS

IN considering the vegetation of Europe as a whole we can distinguish five distinct floral zones. The most northerly of these is the Tundra, a wilderness of snow in the winter, an almost impassable, fever-haunted, mosquito-ridden, flower-decked swamp in summer. Here no cereals grow, and the most valuable vegetable product is only reindeer-moss. South of the Tundra, and running across Europe like a belt, is the temperate forest region, divisible roughly into two portions, a more northerly, characterised by trees of a coniferous type, and a more southerly, by those of a deciduous type. The other floral zones of the continent do not concern us here, for Finland lies, for the greater part, in the belt of coniferous forests, though a small portion lies within the Tundra. Finland is one of the best-wooded countries in Europe. More than half the land is covered with forests, and the true forest area, that is, where the soil is dry, is four times as great as the whole of the agricultural land of the country, while even the districts of morass, bog, and rock are also partially covered with trees. In the glacial gravels, pines and firs find suitable soil, and there is everywhere adequate rainfall for their growth. The pines will also flourish in the sands, the firs in the wet ground.

✓ Topelius, the most genial and patriotic of Finns, relates in one of his inimitable stories, that when the high

gods undertook the endowing of the oceans and continents with various forms of wealth, they unluckily forgot poor Finland. Long before they had discovered their error, all the good things that it was in their power to bestow had been distributed. The mistake was irretrievable, since, through their lavish bounty to others, they had nothing left, and what they had already given, it was not in their power to recall. There remained neither warmth nor wealth, neither sunshine nor store of gold, neither the generous grape nor the brilliant gem with which to dower the "fen-land." And so it happened that Finland inherited nothing but herself, and her dowry still consists of her soundless wastes, of granite boulders, of lakes and islands, of strawberries, of meadows where her milch-kine graze, and, above all, of the silence and the glory of her forests, where the pines grow faultless in their towering strength, like the mast of some "great amiral."

It would perhaps puzzle the profoundest scientist to say where and how the first tree came into Finland when the glacial epoch gave way to milder conditions, but the authors of *Kalevala* had no doubts whatever as to the origin of their woods, and as their story accounts not only for the forests, but for the creation of the world as well, we propose to give it at some length.

A certain lady, the Daughter of the Air, found herself, through the influence of the wind while disporting herself on the surface of the water, about to become a mother. After about seven hundred years of patient waiting she fancied that the hour of childbirth was approaching. In this condition she prayed to the supreme deity, Ukko, and at last a duck appeared who took her knee for a

mountain, and thereon built a nest in which it laid six golden eggs and a seventh of iron. When the eggs had been sat on for some time, the Water-Mother (as the maiden was now called) shook them off, and scattered them in the water. They broke, and out of the shells were fashioned the upper and the lower vaults of the universe; the yolk became the sun, the congealed white the moon, and some odd fragments were converted into stars and clouds.

Then the Water-Mother raised her head above the flood, and with a touch of her hand here and a push of her head there, she formed the promontories and hollowed out the gulfs and the bays.

Thirty years later, was born her son, Väinämöinen, the hero of the poem. He immediately plunged headlong into the water, where he remained eight years. He finally settled upon a barren island.

“ There he dwelt, while years passed over,
And his dwelling he established
On the silent, voiceless island,
In a barren, treeless country.
Then he pondered and reflected,
In his mind he turned it over,
Who shall sow this barren country,
Thickly scattering seeds around him ? ”

At last he was comforted by a beneficent deity, who is represented as a slender boy, and bears two names, Pellervoinen and Sampsa.

“ Sampsa, youth of smallest stature,
Came to sow the barren country,
Thickly scattering seeds around him,
Down he stooped the seeds to scatter.
On the land and in the marshes
Both in flat and sandy regions,
And in hard and rocky places.

On the hills he sowed the pine-trees,
On the knolls he sowed the fir-trees,
And in sandy places heather;
Leafy saplings in the valley.

In the dales he sowed the birch-trees,
In the loose earth sowed the alders,
Where the ground was damp with cherries,
Likewise in the marshes, shallows.
Rowan-trees in holy places,
Willows in the fenny regions,
Juniper in stony districts,
Oaks upon the banks of rivers."

The above extract from *Kalevala* forms a kind of poetical catalogue of the most common trees of the Finnish forest, and it only remains in this connection to add a few words in amplification of the information conveyed by the ancient singer.

The most valuable tree, from a commercial point of view, is the common pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), or red wood, or the Norwegian pine as it is sometimes called. The wood is resinous, strong, durable, elastic and free from knots. The farther north we go, the smaller does the tree become, until at last it dwindles to a bush. The common pine grows very slowly, and even under the most favourable circumstances it takes at least fifty to sixty years for it to attain a diameter sufficiently large to be of value at the saw-mills. When one sees the enormous quantities of boards and planks stacked at the ports for export, it is interesting to reflect upon the slow growth of the raw material, and to remember that in the far north, it has taken hundreds of years to grow the trees from which these planks were cut. Trees only twenty-five to thirty years old can, however, be used for paper pulp.

The fir or Norwegian spruce (*Pinus abies*) is not of

such value as the pine for timber, but it is now in great demand for the manufacture of paper pulp. It requires a better soil and more moisture than the pine, but grows more quickly in bulk and therefore in value. In a hundred years a spruce reaches a respectable bulk and height, but if kept for another thirty or forty years longer it splits and becomes comparatively valueless. In the north, where the forests are of mixed pines and firs, the fir-tree grows quite well in the shade that it finds under the shelter of the more stately pines, but it usually kills or at least prevents them from growing to their full height and bulk.

The chief deciduous tree is the birch, which in many districts is taking the place of the resinous trees owing to the continual felling of the forest. It is a most useful tree to the peasant; the leaves provide food for cattle; the twigs are made into brooms and bath-whisks; birch-blocks form the principal fuel for locomotives and hearth, and birch-wood is used in the manufacture of bobbins, now a rather important industry. Cups are improvised out of birch bark, and the trees all through the land are scored in rings, where the bark has been removed from the trees. Whoever wants a cup, or a basket for flowers, berries or mushrooms, takes from the birch and suits himself as to size and shape, and at one time the lover who had no paper, poured out his soul upon a strip of bark. Quite recently, too, paper and envelopes have been made from the same substance, but rather as curiosities and souvenirs.

In one of the runos of *Kalevala* we are told the story of how Väinämöinen loses his harp in a lake, and how, while searching for it, he comes upon a weeping birch-

tree. On asking the cause of its sorrow, he gets a reply in which the birch-tree bewails the way in which it is treated by man, who uses it for so many purposes of his own. The passage, which we quote, is of some length, but it shows that even at the very earliest times the value of this tree for domestic purposes had been fully realised.

" I am wretched in my sorrow,
And can but rejoice in trouble,
Living with my life o'erclouded,
And lamenting in my sorrow.

And I weep my utter weakness,
And my worthlessness lament for,
I am poor, and all unaided,
Wholly wretched, void of succour,
Here in such an evil station,
On a plain among the willows.

Perfect happiness and pleasure
Others always are expecting,
When arrives the beauteous summer,
In the warm days of the summer.
But my fate is different, wretched,
Nought but wretchedness awaits me;
And my bark is peeling from me,
Down are hewed my leafy branches.

Often unto me defenceless
Oft to me, unhappy creature,
In the short spring come the children,
Quickly to the spot they hurry,
And with sharpened knives they score me,
Draw my sap from out my body,
And in summer wicked herdsmen,
Strip from me my white bark-girdle,
Cups and plates therefrom constructing,
Baskets too, for holding berries.

Often unto me defenceless,
Oft to me, unhappy creature,
Come the girls beneath my branches,
Come beneath, and dance around me.
From my crown they cut the branches,
And they bind them into besoms.

Often too, am I, defenceless,
Oft am I, unhappy creature,
Hewed away to make a clearing,
Cut to pieces into faggots.
Thrice already in this summer,
Unto me have come the woodmen,
And have hewed me with their axes,
Hewed the crown from me unhappy,
And my weak life is departed.

This has been my joy in summer,
In the warm days of the summer,
But no better was the winter,
Nor the time of snow more pleasant.

And in former times already,
Has my face been changed by troubles,
And my head has drooped with sadness,
And my cheeks have paled with sorrow,
Thinking o'er the days of evil.

And the wind brought ills upon me,
And the frost brought bitter sorrows.
Tore the wind the green cloak from me
Frost my pretty dress from off me.
Thus am I of all the poorest,
And a most unhappy birch-tree,
Standing stripped of all my clothing,
As a naked trunk I stand here,
And in cold I shake and tremble,
And in frost I stand lamenting."

Judging by what I saw one day in a Finnish cottage, the birch and several other trees as well, might easily sing the same song to-day, of how man, for his comfort, makes use of the trees that beautify his fatherland. I had been strolling along the Punkaharju ridge, regardless of the passage of time, and about six in the evening I arrived at Punkasalmi, hungry, and with no return train for two hours. As far as I could at first see, Punkasalmi consisted only of a farm-house and the railway station, but I struck into the road, wandered on, and presently arrived at a tiny hamlet of log-huts not very far away.

Attached to one of the cottages was the word *KAHVILA*, which being interpreted is "Café." As I was in a very famished condition, I knocked at the door and asked for coffee. I was admitted by a barefooted woman into the most wooden building I had ever seen outside the playthings of a nursery. The house contained two rooms, both spotlessly clean, and was built of logs of pine-wood and roofed with flat pine shingles. Round the walls of the larger room ran a wide wooden bench, and the tables and chairs were all of local woods and of home manufacture. The hat-rack was a branch of a tree nailed to the wall. There was a three-legged table, a four-branched stand for flower-pots, sundry picture-frames and a towel-rail, all of birch in the natural condition with the silvery bark adorning the surface.

But to return to our forests.

There are two varieties of alder, the common red alder of the south, habitant of the swamps and river banks, and the hoary wavy-leafed species of the north-east and centre, where it is sometimes more common than the birch.

The aspen grows almost as far north as the birch, but rarely forms dense woods. Of late years it has been extensively used in the manufacture of matches.

In the extract given from *Kalevala*, it will be noticed that the rowan or mountain-ash was planted "in holy places," a reminder of the fact that this tree was held sacred amongst the Finns. It extends far up to the north, where its bright red berries form prominent splashes of colour against the sombre hues of the more prevalent conifers.

The oak is highly treasured, most likely because it is

so difficult to grow in Finland. At one time oaks were more plentiful than they are at the present time, when they are almost entirely confined to the south coast.

In the legend referring to the sowing of the forest which we have already quoted, it is stated that Sampsa sowed oaks "upon the banks of rivers," but, to the great disappointment of Väinämöinen, none grew up. The deficiency was, however, remedied in a few days; five water-maidens made a quantity of hay, after which a giant rose out of a flood and set the hay on fire. When the bonfire was over an acorn was found amongst the ashes, and the oak began to grow. Unfortunately it grew so fat and tall, and its branches were so close together and so widely extended, that the clouds could no longer be seen, and the light of the sun and the moon was blotted out. Väinämöinen was again in distress and appealed to his mother for assistance. In answer to his prayers a little man appeared, no larger than the hero's thumb and clad in copper. The primæval hero laughed at the diminutive stature of the apparition, which responded by suddenly growing to a colossal height and felling the oak with three strokes of an axe. The earth then once more enjoyed the blessings of light, and the fragments of the tree, which were carried in all directions by the waters, endowed with miraculous powers those who were so fortunate as to find them.

A very striking feature of the forests is their wealth of berries—strawberries, raspberries, bilberries, whortleberries, cranberries and cloudberry. They grow everywhere—in the woods and on all the moors and marshes. The peasants in some parts of the country used to pay,

and even still pay, part of their rent in berries. So plentiful and excellent are the strawberries that one of the many descriptive titles bestowed upon Finland is "Strawberry Land," and a common saying runs, "My land is strawberry land; the stranger's land is bilberry land."

The strawberries are at their best in July, when they are gathered in enormous quantities and eaten at every meal with thick rich cream and sugar. They are not much bigger than peas, so that a plate will hold several hundreds, and they must be eaten with a spoon. When a spoon is not at hand, the orthodox method is to spear them with a long pin.

The peasant children gather the berries and offer them for sale in small birch-bark baskets at the lake piers and railway stations, take them round to the villas, or send them off to market in the towns. Wherever a train or steamer stops you can eat your fill for a few pence. The berry plays a great part in the native poetry and forms a common simile for a young lady.

"And of all thy race the fairest,
Like a floweret by the wayside,
Like a raspberry on the mountain."

Or again—

"In her father's house a maiden
Lives like strawberry in the garden."

Or—

"Like a leaflet thou wast fluttering
As a butterfly wast fluttering,
Berry-like in native-soil,
Or on open ground a raspberry."

Such then are the elements that form the Finnish forest, common enough considered singly, yet here

united into a landscape peculiarly their own. There is none of the majesty of the mountain, the awe of the deep dark ravine, or the mystery of the inaccessible, but there is, nevertheless, a great charm that seems but to deepen every moment, as one grows more familiar with the recesses of the forest.

With the winter the woodland takes on a new form and character. The upright trunks and branches become a host of silvery pillars, of whitened arms and crystal tracery. The low shrubs and underwood are converted into fantastic shapes that suggest frozen gnomes or sleeping spirits that sometimes turn themselves a little in their slumbers as the winter winds sweep over their silent forms. When the moon is at the full the mystery is deepened, and it would indeed be strange if the people who inhabit these lonely spots did not see supernatural beings under the silvery drifts or hear the voices of the spirit world as the snow falls lightly but audibly from the branches. It is the forest in its winter dress that is probably at the bottom of that intense superstition that, despite all contradiction of the fact, is so prominent a feature of the Finnish character.

Everywhere amongst the trees lie scattered the huge boulders deposited by glaciers in the days before the trees came. They look like the discarded playthings of a race of giants, and one sometimes wonders how the trees ever manage to grow at all amongst such inhospitable surroundings.

The great mass of the forests lie on the higher ground, on that plateau region that is enclosed by the coastal plain, and especially in the north, west and east. The ownership of these valuable areas is divided between

the State and private persons or companies. From the earliest times the State has claimed all waste land as its own, and has kept in its possession the greater part of the almost uninhabited northern territories, so that at the present time the Crown districts cover about 35 million acres. Of these, 14 million acres are dry forest soil and 21 millions bogs, rocks and water. About 5 million acres of the bog and marsh land produce timber of commercial value; another 3 million acres either possess young trees, or consist of land capable of development as timber-growing regions.

Not till 1850 was it decided to establish a proper forest administration. Up to that time there were officials to regulate hunting and shooting, but the Crown lands, as such, were managed by the ordinary district officials. The system at present in operation is a modification of that originally established by Edmund von Berg, the President of the renowned Forest School of Tharand in Saxony, who was summoned to give advice to the authorities some fifty years ago. To-day, the administration of the forests is under the Exchequer Department of the Finnish Senate. The head of the service is the Chief Director. He is assisted by two assistant chiefs, two engineers, a number of secretaries, head surveyors and other officials. These together form the central administrative body. For the actual field work the country is divided into eight inspection districts, which are subdivided into smaller areas, each under the control of a ranger who is directly responsible to the inspector. In the less important areas the position of ranger is taken by a forester, in the more important by an assistant ranger, and under all the rangers there

are keepers. There are now sixty-eight rangers, thirteen assistant rangers and foresters, and eight hundred and twelve keepers.

There is much work to be done by such a department besides the regular cultivation of the forest. In some places mosses grow rapidly and kill the trees, and these can only be got rid of by proper drainage. The big trees have all been counted, and it is now estimated that, on the Government domains, there are about 26,500,000 pines large enough to furnish big logs, and 30,000,000 trees large enough for railway sleepers. These, with the trees that have not been counted, are probably worth eight millions sterling.

Many causes in the past have conspired to effect the ruin of the forests. Trees were ruthlessly cut down for their resin or tar, burnt to clear the ground for the sake of two years' grain and subsequent pasture, destroyed by fires caused often through extreme carelessness, and ruined by the increase of moss and marshes. Since the organisation of the Forest Department, much has been accomplished to prevent the recurrence of such disasters. In addition, old trees, which do not increase annually in value, have been felled; the demands of the market have been studied, and facilities for handling the timber increased. The only thing that hampers the work of a very honest and energetic body of officials is the lack of adequate funds.



CHAPTER IV

WHAT FINLAND DOES WITH HER TIMBER

IN the *Timber Trades Journal* for March 1910, there was an exhaustive review of the timber resources of Finland and of various forest and allied industries. The writer, who had made an extended tour throughout the country, says that "Finland's wealth and Finland's forests are synonymous. All Scandinavia is most widely known, apart from the tourist interest, for its apparently limitless profusion of merchantable timber, but the Finnish forest resources mean even more to the country than do the wood areas to either Norway or Sweden. In the latter two, forest products are one of several valuable avenues to wealth, but in the Grand Duchy of Finland timber and its allied products are far and away the principal export and leading source of industrial activity and development. For instance, to take at random any average year, it will be seen that the wood products present an amazing variety. (In addition to deals, battens and boards, we find firewood, tarwood, charcoal, potash wood, tar barrels, fencing, boathook handles, hoops and willow twigs, lathwood, tar, shingles, potash, fir and birch twigs, leaves, pine-seed, building timber, reindeer-moss, bark," and many other forest products.)

"In Finland wood is used from the cradle to the grave,

and there is some use, commercial or domestic, for every component part of a tree. All we see here in England is the manufactured wood, but there the product is utilised for every conceivable purpose. Birch leaves provide fodder for cattle, birch twigs are used for brooms and bath massage, fir branches form a mat at every door, split saplings constitute the only field fencing, rough hewn logs, dovetailed, compose many a house, and birch-blocks are to this day the principal fuel for locomotive and hearth, while twine is made from roots."

The development of the forests is left in all cases to private firms and merchants. The Crown, though it owns so many acres of woodland, possesses no saw-mills and produces no sawn goods. The trees are sold standing at public auction. The expense of felling, hauling, and floating has to be borne by the purchasers, who have to complete their contracts, as far as felling is concerned, by April of each year.

In some cases the expense of floating logs down a river is borne by a union of shippers floating on each river; and expenses are proportionately debited against each firm and log. The cost of floating a log is about four-pence.

The Forest Department will also sell by tender, or grant concessions for a number of years to cut a maximum number of logs, and the annual profits made by the State have increased by leaps and bounds.

Historically, the timber trade dates back to the Middle Ages, when logs were handsawn and shipped only through Åbo. Now you can see the most up-to-date machinery, worked by electric power generated in private stations, and this within a few miles of the Arctic Circle, miles

from railhead, and outside the rounds of the rural postman. Like an endless sausage, the logs, which in most cases have been floated a few hundred kilometres down to the coast, mount the inclined planes from the water. Into the frames they slide one after the other, to emerge white, attenuated planks or laths, measured, and ready to slip through a trap in the floor into carts which are ready to convey them to the yards, to be stacked and dried. In the miniature port which lies close at hand, a fleet of lighters is waiting for the first open water to carry the goods out to the steamer.

One of the best places to visit in order to see something of the timber industry is Kajana, in the north, the starting-point for the descent of the Uleå Rapids, and a frequent place of resort for fishermen. The journey, as far as Kuopio, can be made either by rail or boat, but the last short stage of the journey to Kajana must be made by train. A little hotel with most moderate charges provides comfortable accommodation for guests, and the pity is that so many people arrive at this beautiful spot late in the afternoon and leave early in the morning, merely halting for a few hours' rest and sleep before shooting the rapids. Kajana is a wee place of 2000 inhabitants, and is situated on the shores of two waterfalls, with the ruins of an old castle on an island between the falls. The ruins only amount to a handful of rough stones scattered over a fragment of a rock in the middle of the rapids. A glance from the bridge that crosses the stream reveals all there is to see of the castle, which without the help of the guide-book would assuredly never suggest anything half so imposing.

The pile of tumbled stones was the work of the Russians

in 1717. Inside the walls were a number of women and children who had fled there for shelter, and fifty brave defenders. For over a month four thousand Russians besieged the little garrison, and yet, had it not been for the want of food, they might have been bombarding the place to this day. Not a man of the garrison was killed, and it was only for the sake of the starving women and children that the white flag was hoisted on the battlements. When the Russian general saw how weak was the force that had been holding his soldiers at bay, he was so enraged that he undermined the structure and blew the place to pieces. If it be night-time when you stand upon the bridge and listen to the thunder of the tumbling waters as they boil about the rocky foundations of the blasted walls, you may hear the roar of the cannons as they bellowed through that weary month, or fancy you hear the loud hurrah of the final cry that burst the walls asunder. But the chances are you will not long remain in silence on the bridge, for the mosquitoes of Kajana are innumerable, and severally irresistible.

The trees of the forests are felled in the winter months when the hard frozen snow renders it an easy matter to transport the timber, by means of sledges, through the recesses of otherwise impassable forests. On arrival at the river a number of the large trees are bound together by chains into a big framework, inside of which thousands of logs are packed side by side to form an enormous raft which is towed away by a small tug, or, where the current is strong enough, merely allowed to drift with the stream. The men whose business it is to superintend the voyage of the rafts build little straw-thatched huts upon the

floating foundation. In these temporary homes they, and some other members of their family, spend a fairly merry time. As horses are required to haul timber and to perform other operations, they are carried on the raft itself, and it is no uncommon sight to see a whole family, pa, ma, and the baby, to say nothing of the pony, gathered round a fire made upon the raft, busily engaged in watching the preparation of a meal.

Some of the rafts are enormous in size, measuring as much as a mile long, and, where the passage will admit it, half a mile broad. On arrival at a fall or a rapid, or at a place where the passage is impeded by the arches of a bridge or other obstacle, the raft is broken up and the logs sent singly down the current. A number of heavy logs are fastened together to form a series of guides which prevent the senseless, helpless lumps of timber from straying into backwaters or out-of-the-way corners. Where the distance between the guides is narrow, men are stationed on either side in boats. As soon as a log gets athwart the passage, the men seize it with hooked poles and turn it longitudinally, so preventing it from jamming and obstructing the free passage of its relatives. When these precautions are not taken the logs occasionally pile themselves into great heaps which are broken up with considerable difficulty. The men who have to disentangle these wooden piles carry their lives in their hands, for the masses of logs are apt to fall to pieces with disconcerting suddenness, filling the air with a series of violent reports that afar off can easily be mistaken for the bursting of bombs.

It is quite amusing to watch the timber go over the edge of a fall. The logs come sailing grandly along

like some staid and portly old gentleman, very full of pride and self-importance. On arrival at the point of descent they tip over and go head-first down into the whirlpool below, from which, in a few seconds, they emerge once more, with a most surprised expression upon their wooden countenances. There is something so intensely funny in the contrast between their slow and solemn progress on the river and their sudden immersion in the fall, that you involuntarily burst into laughter, over and over again, as the pompous old gentlemen come up shivering and indignant from their unexpected and exhausting descent. And all the time the tossing, twisting, whirling waters laugh loudly at their discomfiture, and cloudlets of spray burst over them with less distressing and sunnier smiles.

When the logs arrive at the end of the narrow waterway they are seized by an army of men who are awaiting their approach. The men are stationed on a kind of floating bridge and are armed with hooked poles. Each log bears the mark of its owner, and, as it nears the bridge, one of the men seizes it with his hook and sends it under the proper arch into another enclosure, where it ultimately forms part of another raft that can be towed away across the lake to another stretch of dangerous water, where this series of operations can be repeated. The process is, on the whole, such a slow one, that it takes from two to three years before the timber finally completes its long journey from the forest to the sea.

Some of the timber is sawn up in the country, and is either exported or used for domestic purposes. Long straight pine trunks are exported in large numbers to the north and centre of England for use as pit props. At one of

the export towns, Kotka, on the Gulf of Finland, whenever in one year the number of logs reaches a million, a public fête is given to celebrate the event. The total amount of sawn timber produced in 1906 was 3,259,331 cubic metres.

Paper pulp is manufactured in large quantities, much of which is converted into paper and exported in that form. England is one of the chief buyers. Reels upon which cotton can be wound are sold in millions.

Another important industry connected with the forest is the manufacture of pine tar. Towards the end of the winter, the trees destined for the manufacture of the tar are barked. The bark is removed for a distance of six or seven feet from the ground, care being taken to preserve on the north side a single narrow band. This band serves as the means of conveying the sap to the upper part of the tree and so preventing its immediate destruction. Thus prepared, the barked tree is left to itself for another twelve months, while the resin oozes out and forms a hard solid lump round the trunk. Next year the bark is stripped off to a still greater height, and another period of repose follows. This goes on as long as the tree produces any resin, and the crust gets thicker and thicker every month. When this state of things is reached nothing remains but to fell the tree. This is always done in the autumn, when the trunk, completely full of resin, is cut into long narrow strips, which are collected and dragged to a tar-kiln.

The method of extraction, though improved in places, is, on the whole, primitive and wasteful as it was many years ago. Prince Galitzin, travelling in the days before the advent of railways and telephones, tells us, " We had

journeyed about eight versts when a strong odour of smoke became apparent, followed soon by long streaks of flame escaping across a screen of young pines which bordered the left side of our route. The coachman informed me that these flames came from a furnace for the distillation of tar. Curious to see the thing with my own eyes, I made the carriage stop and penetrated the wood on foot, followed by my interpreter. After proceeding for about forty paces I had to turn aside on account of a rampart formed of small branches interlaced, whose object was to shelter the furnace against the wind. Then I found myself in front of the apparatus which I am going to describe.

“Figure to yourself a conical hillock, composed of long logs of pine arranged like the spokes of a wheel above a big hole in the form of a basin, and from the summit of which issued sheets of flame and eddies of smoke. After having piled up the logs, the workman covers the whole with a mixture of earth and turf, leaving, however, a hole at the summit.” A fire is kindled at various points “and soon spreads through the entire mass. In the centre of the hole is placed a pipe which leads the product of distillation into a subterranean vault from which it is afterwards transferred into casks.

“It takes usually 200 pine stems, aged about thirty years, to form one pile. If the combustion is carried out under favourable conditions, without being disturbed by violent winds or strong rains, the process is complete in the space of six days, and in this case the quantity of resin obtained is from eighty to eighty-five barrels of ordinary dimensions. Each time that the reservoir where the products of distillation are collected

is full, the men distribute the contents between a number of barrels, each of which is only three-parts filled. These barrels are then left to themselves for forty-eight hours. On the second day the bungs are opened, and all the scum which has separated from the resin during the night is allowed to flow to the ground. In more satisfactory methods of production, this substance would very probably be utilised. The barrels are finally filled with pure tar, and are then ready for shipment to the coast."

According to a later writer a successful burning takes about a fortnight, and produces about a hundred barrels to the kiln. These primitive methods of tar extraction are practised right through the northern belt of coniferous forests from the Gulf of Bothnia to Russia. They cannot usually be inspected by the summer visitor, as the tar-burning is over or abandoned as soon as the hot weather demands all the available labour in the fields.

A barrel of tar weighs about four hundred pounds, and as the distance from the kiln to the port is sometimes as much as two hundred miles, the method of transport is of considerable importance. Owing to the continual increase in the value of timber, only the stubs of felled trees are used in central Finland, and even in the north there is a tendency to follow the same plan, though the old wasteful methods are still in use.

The tar-boats have already been described in connection with the account given of the navigation of the rapids. It may be added here that each boat will hold from twenty to twenty-six barrels, and that during the season as many as a hundred tar-boats will go through Kajana in a single day. On the lakes, they are rowed or sailed according to the force and direction of the wind, but in



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TAR-BOATS WAITING TO ENTER THE LOCK AT KAJANA

TO VINE
AND BOTTLES

the rapids the rapidity of the current carries them along at a pace that can be faintly imagined when it is remembered that the down journey will take two days and the up journey as much as three weeks. On the return the boats are towed through the smaller rapids and are carried on carts past the larger ones where towing is impossible. Each crew consists of a pilot and two rowers, one of whom is a woman, and is expected to make three complete trips in a season.

Amongst the chief tar depots is Uleåborg, a port at the northern end of the Gulf of Bothnia. The most important-looking building in Uleåborg is the hotel. It is the property of the town, and possesses an exterior that suggests a continental opera house. Inside it is about as well furnished and as comfortable as a warehouse. I have not often stayed in a hotel with such wide and withal such dismal staircases and corridors. Only for a few days in each year is there anything like a sufficient number of guests to fill the building, but on those days, when men come from all over the land to purchase certain forest rights and leases, and to speculate in timber and salmon, the hotel is crowded to the very doors. It is then almost impossible to get lodgings anywhere in the town, and a spare bed is worth a great deal to its possessor.

Uleåborg is not, on the whole, a very interesting town. One of the features that first attracts attention, after the dreariness of the big hotel, is the church tower, which has been utilised as a station for a beacon light. At night a broad searchlight sweeps the waters and guides the puzzled navigator through the narrow and intricate channels.

There are at least two fairly interesting walks in Uleåborg itself. The first takes you over the bridges which connect a number of small islands and cross a series of foam-crested rapids. Over the bridge come many peasants tramping into town on business. Numbers of them are barefooted and without boots; others are barefooted, but have boots which they carry in their hands. This is a common practice in Finland, especially on Sundays in the country districts, when those who come long distances to church put on their shoes and smarten themselves up at the church door, a practice which may have had its origin either in a spirit of reverence or a sense of economy. Between the first and second bridges is a small island with some remnants of a castle built between five and six hundred years ago. The Russians have played their usual merry tricks with it, and there is nothing to see. Round the edge of the little island there are six little baby cannons on six little baby gun-carriages. The muzzles of the infantile tubes of iron are pointed at the town in threatening attitude, but with no intent to hurt.

The second walk leads out to a flat peninsula on the other side of the town where the women congregate to do their washing. This is a merry and interesting sight. All round the edge of the peninsula women are beating, banging and scrubbing clothes in the fresh waters of the tideless gulf. On the flat land itself there are flat tables where more scrubbing is in process, big tubs where wringing the garments is the chief amusement, and great black cauldrons, underneath which sparkle jolly fires of wood, and over which hang clouds of steam that are occasionally but only momentarily scattered by



WATERFALL, KAJANA



WASHERWOMAN, ULEÅBORG

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TO THE
LIBRARY

the breeze. By the sides of the cauldrons are the fattest of women with the widest of smiles, the merriest of eyes, and the most courteous willingness to pose for you if you wish to photograph. And all the time you are there, clothes keep coming and going in carts, the women are calling one unto the other, the men are cracking their whips, and the life of a Uleåborg washerwoman in the month of August seems the ideal occupation.

The bats which the women use in beating the clothes are often beautifully ornamented and carved. They used to constitute a customary and symbolic gift on the part of any young man to any young woman on whom his affections were set.

From Uleåborg you can go north or south by train or steamer. By the railway you can go north to Tornea in four hours, and then on into Sweden and down to Stockholm. If you go south you will travel over the wide, uninteresting, monotonous plains of Osterbotten to Tammerfors and other towns in the south of Finland.

Uleåborg is not the only tar depot, but it is the one most easily visited by the traveller following the conventional routes through the country. Of the timber ports that come within his reach we may mention Åbo and Viborg. At either of these places some idea of the true source of the country's wealth can be pleasantly gained.

Åbo is one of the ports of disembarkation for passengers to Finland. The way into the harbour leads through an archipelago of granite rocks, of varied and delightful aspect. The traveller needs no one to tell him, when he puts his foot on shore, that he has come to a foreign country. The names of all the streets are written in three languages,

Swedish, Finnish, and Russian. You step into a drosky, a kind of magnified perambulator drawn by a species of dwarf pony, and are conducted to your destination by a man whose uncivilised appearance gives no clue whatever to his skill in handling the adult go-cart. If you are afraid of the drosky, you can go on the tram. Here again things are arranged in a way disconcerting to an Englishman. You get in at the front instead of the back, and on the right-hand side instead of the left. There is a driver but no conductor, and you drop your money into a metal missionary box with a glass front and an arrangement for showing the precise amount of your donation. The driver wears a smart uniform of fawn khaki with handsome blue trimmings. Åbo is full of uniforms, white, red, blue; helmets with copper, brass, silvered and gilded ornaments. There must be quite a large proportion of the 48,000 inhabitants of this port engaged in the control or supervision of some one else. Even those who are under authority do not seem to be able to exist without a badge, for the university students, both male and female, all wear a white velvet cap with a black band round it and a little gilded lyre stuck in front.

The sights of Åbo, apart from the timber wharves, are few. At the dock end of the town, where the steamers anchor, is the castle. It is in two parts, an old and a new, but neither is imposing or in the slightest degree suggestive of a castle. The building has oftener been taken for a factory or mill. There are towers, windows, staircases, a church, and all the usual appurtenances of these professional homes of the lords and ladies of the past. A part of the new castle, once used as a prison, has been

converted into a museum, where a large and varied assortment of clothes, armour and domestic articles shows at a glance the development of the home life of these northern people.

In the middle of the town there is a great square where a daily market is held. The market is devoted largely to farm produce. The eggs, fowls, fruit, hay and vegetables are brought to market in little carts with palisaded sides drawn by tiny ponies, and in smaller carts with smaller palisaded sides drawn by tiny children. The horses are mostly brown; the children are mostly bleached. Their hair is almost too fair to be called light. In many cases it is nearly white. Hats are scarce. Handkerchiefs are common. The handkerchief as a covering to the head has many good points. It can be so folded as to frame a pretty face or hide an ugly one. It can be washed daily, and is so cheap that variety is as easy of attainment as cleanliness.

In Åbo market, attention is concentrated on the disposal of very small articles. Commerce consists in the skilful vending of single radishes, half-pounds of many things, and odd-looking assorted lumps of meat, some of the joints of which suggest an equine origin of remote antiquity. Bread is sold in the usual round flat cakes with holes in the middle.

About midday the people go home, and then the scavengers come round with brushes made of birch twigs and leaves, gently sweep the stones as though they were afraid of hurting them, gather up the refuse as though they were loath to say good-bye to it, and put it into receptacles about the size of big buckets which they move from place to place on wheels.

At the east end of Åbo is the cathedral, which, dating back to the thirteenth century and built of brick supported on enormous blocks of granite, has much of the dignity that belongs to age; but the exterior is better than the interior.

Inside, whitewash and cheap paint have not added to the beauty of the brick and the stone. There are queer alcoves and galleries—to the young, tempting places for a game of hide and seek; to the old, comfortable resting-places where a nap may be indulged in without fear of detection from the most vigilant parson.

There are a number of side-chapels containing the remains of noted Swedes and Finns. Here lay the English Henry who was the first bishop and is the patron saint of the land, and here still lies Catherine the peasant queen. The ashes of Henry were removed by the Russians in 1720, though what benefit they obtained by disturbing the poor old man after all these centuries of sleep, only a Russian bureaucrat could say.

In front of the cathedral runs the river on whose banks Åbo is built. In this river the women wash their clothes, much after the fashion of those we have seen at work at Uleåborg. Below the bridge there is a water market, where, on the boats, the sails are slung over the lowered masts to form a kind of tent, under the shelter of which bearded men and sun-tanned women pursue their leisurely mode of operations of buying and selling.

Viborg is the most frequented harbour of Finland. On account of its favourable position near St. Petersburg and the fact that it is a terminus of railways and canals leading to the interior, it stands second in the value of its trade. Large vessels cannot reach the port, but are

obliged to discharge and load at Trångsund, a strongly fortified roadstead about eight miles further south. The chief export is timber.

Viborg is little visited by the tourist, and there is much probability that the man who "does" Switzerland in two days and Paris in two hours would find little to interest him. The majority of those who come to Viborg merely arrive *en route* for somewhere else. But apart from the fact that this town is the most convenient starting-point for several of the show places of Finland, it possesses an interest of its own for the man who likes to saunter about and see other people doing unaccustomed work in unaccustomed ways.

The best way to reach Viborg from Helsingfors is by steamer, as the train journey offers little that is attractive except its own special excitements, and these can be sampled elsewhere, where the alternative route lacks the fascination and the variety of the waterway to Viborg.

As at Åbo, there are few regulation "sights" at Viborg. One of the most conspicuous of these is "Fat Katerina" in the market-place. Now this corpulent Kate is not a female, but a round tower of great circumference and strength, which once formed part of the fortifications that surrounded the town, for Viborg, as a central point in the province of Karelen, was of much importance and was strongly fortified. The walls that surrounded it were begun somewhere about four and a half centuries ago. The utility of the round tower at the present day is not very apparent, except that rows of indolent drosky drivers bask in its expansive shadow during the hot hours of the day. The old walls have disappeared, and

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their place has been taken by an esplanade, where tall and shady trees form sheltered avenues, and where a number of green lawns are embroidered in circular patches with brilliant flowers. In this Esplanade there is a fine restaurant, where you take your meals to the sound of merry music. The Finns, having to spend several months in cold and semi-darkness, make up for the sombre period of the year by enjoying the open air and the sunshine during the summer months. The open-air restaurants are a great feature of all the towns, even the little ones. The bands that play an accompaniment to the audible mastication of the throng are excellent, and their repertoire extensive and classical. You drink your soup with Massenet, take your joint with Wagner, and sip your coffee to the soothing and mellifluous strains of Mendelssohn.

Not far away from "Fat Katerina" is the castle, something over six hundred years old, and built to keep secure this part of the country when the Swedes wanted to prevent the Russians from entering their territory. Round the castle and its courtyard runs a granite rampart, that rises sheer out of the waters of the gulf. The building was at the height of its power in the fourteenth century, and at that time was held by many powerful men, but as the fortifications of the town increased the castle lost its significance, fell into neglect, and at the beginning of the seventeenth century was in ruins. The Russians have recently restored the shot-battered walls and the old tower, and use the place as a barracks. In these times it would be useless for defensive purposes and so is wisely left unfortified. It is a grim and gloomy looking

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TO VIBU ANGOLUO



WOMEN STACKING FUEL, VIBORG



WOOD MARKET, VIBORG

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building, a veritable symbol in stone and iron of the heavy hand of Russia.

Viborg possesses a market that is not surpassed by that of Åbo. From early morn till noon it is a source of pure delight. The women at the stalls are so fat and cheery, the wild strawberries are so red and cheap, and the butter smells so sweetly that you want to purchase everything on the stalls and make the acquaintance of every one you see. There are stalls, like other stalls, where meat and vegetables are sold, and where mistress and maid go picking and choosing and bargaining for the daily dinner; there are fish stalls and cheese wagons; ice-cream carts, and tables where they sell sundry non-intoxicants of brilliant crimson and yellow hues; there are piles of round, flat, acid plasticiny loaves, and there are, in particular, rows upon rows of Kringlas cakes, the special delicacy of Viborg.

There is also a water market, but most characteristic of all is the wood market. There is no natural supply of coal or oil in Finland, and the common fuel is the product of the extensive forests. Wood is almost the universal fuel for home and factory, train and steamer. The handling of the millions upon millions of logs consumed in this way must afford employment to many people. Most of the fuel that comes to Viborg arrives in wide, clumsy boats and is then stacked on the quay. The logs are thrown out by the women, piled symmetrically by the women, and one would not be very much surprised if one were told that the trees had been felled by the women, though this is not the case. For in Finland women do many things that we regard as work for man

alone, such as bricklaying, plumbing, and slaughtering cattle. But of this more anon.

The letter-boxes attached to the walls are painted yellow, not red as with us. They all bear two posthorns crossed and a representation of the back of an envelope. Their function is unmistakable to the meanest intellect. The Finn has a genius for making crooked ways straight. He puts the names on the streets and on the railway tickets in three languages, and the notices in the railway carriages in six !

"Nothing," says Frederiksen, "is more noticeable in Finland . . . than the waste of timber. Not long ago in Northern Tavastland, and still later in Carelia, it was thought good policy to burn the old pine woods simply that they might be changed to pasture land or into plantations of deciduous trees. . . . Rather than lose the skin of a squirrel a hunter would without hesitation fell the finest tree. (Even to-day an incredible waste goes on, trees being felled for the construction of fences . . . and yet more are felled for firewood."

The same writer is responsible for the following : "From the far north come complaints of the reindeer interfering with young plants by their trampling, and destroying great quantities of young trees by scraping them with their horns. Here . . . a certain amount of grazing is helpful to the growing trees in places where there is an abundance of reindeer lichen ; but hard grazing dries up the soil, to the great detriment of the older trees. Hundreds of thousands of spruce are felled to obtain lichen during the winter when there is not enough on the ground ; special men are engaged on this work ; but it is no great loss, because they only cut down

the unhealthy valueless trees on the marshes. In some northern districts an extravagant number of trees is cut down to obtain small fir branches to place under the cattle. Millions of cart-loads of moss are taken away for the same purpose, or to fill up joints in wooden buildings, but this does not hurt the forest. We hear sometimes of damage done by pigs to the growing woods near the villages; but every one knows that it is especially the pasturage of sheep and horses which does harm to the young plants."

When one considers the immense amount of timber that is daily used for domestic purposes, or exported to other lands, one is naturally tempted to inquire as to what is being done to make good the ravages of the peasant and the merchant. Finland has done very little in the way of re-forestation, as there are still vast primæval forests untouched owing to their remoteness and the difficulty of access over hundreds of miles of lakes, rivers and bogs. And as far as the private merchant is concerned, the planting of trees for the production of sawn goods is of no value. The average life of the trees used by one of the big timber companies is over one hundred years, and the growth is only one inch in five years. But for all this, there does not appear to be much ground for any dismal forebodings as to the failure of the timber supply. Mr. M. Price, in a report upon the pine forests of the Uleå River district, a report which was published in *The Journal of Forestry*, says that "wherever there is sufficient light, pines propagate like weeds, and, in fact, the Finnish peasant often has to hoe the seedlings. . . . At the present rate of annual cutting it would take fifteen years before the forests of the Uleå basin were once cut

over. At the end of that time there would be about half a million acres of younger forest containing pine timber varying from 80 to 100 years of age, producing a total of some 400,000,000 cubic feet. It is not difficult to see, therefore, that the supply in these districts is simply inexhaustible, the demand for timber for local consumption being negligible."

CHAPTER V

ON A FINNISH FARM

THE most important of the various agricultural classes in the north of Europe is the "bonde" or peasant-proprietor, who owes his superiority of position as compared with that of the peasants of the south largely to the fact that in the north agriculture is only profitable when carried out on a large scale, whereas in the south, greater fertility and better climatic conditions render much smaller holdings profitable. The peasant-proprietor constitutes a powerful middle-class element that is of undoubted strength to the nation.

In the north of Finland, where the forests are unworked, and in the remote east where the peasants are bound to large domains belonging to Russians, there is a great deal of poverty, and the peasants live in miserable houses that serve for themselves and the pig at the same time, as is the case in parts of Ireland. But even here, owing to the facilities for earning money in St. Petersburg, there are comparatively few paupers in receipt of relief. There is far more pauperism in the remote country districts where, when the harvests fail, the few sheep are slaughtered for food, and bark and chopped straw form the chief ingredients of the bread. In these out-of-the-way districts there were, even at the beginning of the nineteenth century, many extensive areas where the

only means of communication were rough riding-tracks, though in other places, where the ground was soft and spongy, really first-class roads were made by the Finnish engineers. In order to establish a solid foundation, they commenced by placing a number of small beams solidly tied together athwart the road. Then on this flooring, sand and the debris of granite rocks were spread, and ground which was formerly impassable for horses was converted into an excellent highway.

In the south and west we find the large peasant holdings common to all the Scandinavian countries. Here the farmer corresponds roughly to our own yeomen. There is an air of prosperity about the outsides of the houses, and a degree of comfort within, that is rather a revelation to those who have, from a distance, thought of the Finn as scraping a bare living from the thinly-covered granite. The proprietor will, on the average, own four or five horses, twenty or thirty cows, good farming implements of home or foreign manufacture, and possibly even a small steam-engine. The houses, which are usually of one storey, are arranged round a quadrangle. In the west, two-storeyed farm-houses are common. In the interior, the houses are often grouped into villages on the shore of the lake or river, and away from the lands that belong to them. In these cases they are not built in quadrangles, but are either arranged in rows or scattered about in an irregular fashion. Here, as in other parts of the country, a separate house is frequently erected for the use of visitors.

Those who travel into Savolaks, that division of the country which contains Nyslott and Punkaharju, and which is more an archipelago than a part of a continent,

will be struck by the fine situations chosen by the peasants in which to erect their houses. In the lakes that abound in this province, fish are plentiful, and the modifying influence of the water upon the climate prevents, to some extent, damage to the crops from frost. The farm-house is often on a hill rather than in some low swampy area, because the frosts are less severe at the greater altitude, and the land, despite its plentiful covering of boulders and stones, is easier to cultivate than the undrained flats. This is one of the chief butter-making districts, the aromatic herbs of the pasture lands imparting a fine flavour to the butter. Bread is baked once a week, and the ordinary food includes both fish and mutton.

In very remote districts there still remain a few "smoke cottages," houses without windows and chimneys, a mere hole in the roof serving to let out the smoke of the wood fire made upon the open hearth. When the wind is unfavourable, the dwelling is full of smoke, which has serious effects upon the eyes. The spirit of hospitality which is so strong in the Finn is nowhere better manifested than here, for the peasant who lives in this thick, unhealthy atmosphere frequently builds a more comfortable dwelling for the use of strangers.

Everywhere the place of hedges is taken by quaint, rough palisades of unbarked split poles. Long posts are driven at a fairly acute angle into the ground, and are supported by forked double uprights to which they are bound by wooden fibres. The fact that the uprights are double finds expression in a part of the Finnish proverb, "Two is best; two fish in the sea, two birds in the air, two pairs of shoes under the table, and two stakes in the fence."

The sharply pointed uprights are of pine and fir. Two consecutive ones are rarely of the same height, perhaps because as they rot away from below, they are hammered down into the ground from above. The slanting pieces are usually pine, fastened to the uprights with a thong. "One year one may be the stake in a fence, and another year the thong that binds the board to the stake," is a homely lesson upon life's vicissitudes, drawn from the commonest object in the Finnish landscape, the long straggling boundary that, snake-like, winds itself between the green pastures of the meadow-land, or round the edges of the dark, mysterious forests. About it have clustered many common sayings, one of which, true for all countries and all times, runs, "A servant makes a fence and it lasts a year; a son makes a fence and it lasts a lifetime."

The average size and value of these peasant farms is not easy to estimate, but as a rule they vary from 100 to 400 acres, the size depending somewhat on the amount of uncultivable land in the neighbourhood.

Below the "bönder"¹ comes the "torpare," who corresponds to the crofter of Scotland, their "torp" and our "thorp" having a common linguistic origin. The torpare often keeps several horses and cows, and has a good house and furniture, though his condition varies very much in different parts of the country, even in different parts of the same parish.

The rent of the torp is usually paid in labour, an exceedingly desirable arrangement in many places where the tenant has no market for his spare labour and the land-

¹ Singular, *bonde* ; plural, *bönder*.

lord cannot easily obtain any one else to work for him. If the services rendered are, at the usual rates, in excess of those necessary to pay the rent, the peasant receives that excess in cash. If the tenant erects a house on the torp, allowance has to be made for the "improvement," in the rent. In the east and north, where the landlord has less need of labour, the rent is paid in kind. One-third of the net grain crop constitutes the rent in these cases, except where the landlord has found the seed as well as the land, and then the rent is as much as half the net crop. This payment in kind is, on the whole, decidedly favourable to the tenant, for he is far removed from any market where he, with his limited means of transport, could dispose of his crops, and, when the crops fail, his landlord has to suffer with him.

Coming yet another step down the social ladder, we get to the smaller cottagers, each with a small patch of land for pasturage, and one or more cows which give sufficient milk for the family. Some of these cottagers become torp-holders by reclaiming waste land, which they can then farm for three years without paying any rent at all.

The poorest class is the agricultural labourer, many of whom have no home at all, but live in rooms in other people's houses. Formerly their freedom of movement was hindered by the Pauper-Law, that would not allow them to move from place to place unless some householder became security for them. The peasant farmers, among whom they had lived, had not enough work to occupy the whole of their time, and during the winter months they spent many hours asleep by the fireside. They were almost always unprovided with beds, and

even their clothes were sometimes the property of those who found them house-room.

It will have been gathered from the first chapter of this book that Finland is a series of wide plains and plateaus, chiefly of granite and gneiss and other rocks of such a nature as to render the greater part of the country unfit for agriculture. It has been calculated that only three per cent. of the surface is arable, and six per cent. grazing ground. Of the remainder, sixty-three per cent. is forest land and the rest is waste. The most flourishing agricultural districts lie towards the south-west, in the neighbourhood of Helsingfors, Åbo and Tammerfors, and in the wide province of Österbotten. The amount of land brought under cultivation through the draining of marshes and other causes is gradually increasing, but certainly not more than one-tenth of the whole land surface is used for agricultural purposes.

The climate does little or nothing to counteract the unfavourable character of the soil. Occasional frosts in June destroy the rye, while those of August spoil the potatoes, and the winter of eight months in the north, and of five months in the south, causes most agricultural operations to be suspended for long periods. These months are not, however, entirely wasted, as the slack time is used for the repairing or making of carts, hay-poles, gates, rakes, sledges and household furniture.

Rye is sown about the first week in August, and by the time that the snow falls the ground is covered with the rich green of the springing blades.

During the winter, men work from eight in the morning till five in the evening, but in summer they are called to

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A RIA

their labours at four in the morning, and they do not cease work till eight or even later in the evening. The hours of labour are determined by the seasons, it being necessary to make the fullest use of the long periods of summer daylight. Let it not be forgotten that much of the prosperity of this bright and cheerful nation is due to the assistance rendered by the women and children, in the work of tilling the ground and tending the cattle. When darkness and cold put an end to much of the labour in the fields, the women take out their looms and engage in weaving, but during the harvest season only those women who are not physically strong enough to stand the severe strain of field-work are to be found at the loom or the spinning-wheel.

Barley grows as far north as the pine. It was the first grain cultivated in the country, and was brought by the Finns themselves. It forms the staple article of food in parts of the east and the north, and for a long time barley-bread was almost the only kind known. With Swedish immigration, rye to some extent took the place of barley, and later on oats claimed a large part of the farmer's attention. Oats grow as far north as the Arctic Circle, and are used in eastern Finland for bread, though elsewhere they are mainly used as food for cattle, and therefore, with the increase of the dairy business have risen in value.

Much of the grain is dried in a special kind of barn called a *ria*. During the late or cold harvest seasons the sheaves are first dried on stakes and then in the *ria*. The barn contains a curious oven without a chimney, in which a wood fire is kindled and kept going for several days. The heat and the smoke kill the insects that would

otherwise interfere with the grain, and so render the Finnish varieties of particular value for seed purposes.

Notwithstanding that the production of grain has largely increased in recent years, there is a constantly growing import of grain and flour. The Finnish farmers are every year, in increasing numbers, abandoning pure agriculture and replacing this with dairy farming and pasturage. This is due to the increased consumption of butter and milk in the country itself, owing to the growth of population and also to the ever-extending demand of Germany for these products. The butter trade with Germany has recently grown to such an extent that she now takes about half the annual export.

Grasses of many kinds are cultivated, and the methods of haymaking are amongst the first things that attract the attention of the summer visitor. The hay is dried on long poles or on wooden fences. The hay-poles are about six feet high, and are driven into the ground at regular intervals. From the pole projects a series of magnified " hat-pegs " on which the hay is piled in such a way that it does not touch the ground. This arrangement round a central pole facilitates drying; during rain, too, only the outer layers get wet, so that even after a heavy downpour, the inner layers are quite dry. The hay-fences are merely long horizontal poles on slanting supports, and the whole is so cleverly interwoven that not a particle of rope, not a nail or a peg is used in its construction. When the hay is dry, it is carried away on sledges, not on carts, and is stacked in a barn and not piled in a rick. The hay-shed has two doors facing each other. The horse enters at one door, passes on till the sledge is in the centre of the barn, remains still while



DRYING GRAIN ON POLES



HAY SLEDGE

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AMERICA

his load is removed, then trots out of the opposite door and away to the field again. The wooden log-houses which protect the hay are broader above than below, a shape that has been adopted to overcome certain difficulties caused by the heavy winter snowfall.

In the Athenæum at Helsingfors is a picture called *Sved*, by Järnefelt, which never fails to call forth comment on the part of the visitor. It is truly a remarkable picture, and represents a number of peasants engaged in burning the forest in order to obtain a clearing in which to plant their grain. The face of the girl in the foreground, with its strong lights and shadows, is something not readily forgotten. It speaks of a life of intense toil and severe poverty. In the eyes is that curious mingling of fear and courage that comes to all those whose existence is one perpetual struggle with the malevolent forces of nature. But it is not with the picture but with its subject that we are here concerned.

The method of clearing the ground by burning is the primitive one. The operation, always a rather long one, occupied two distinct periods, between which there was a lapse of time often embracing several years. After having marked out the extent of the ground on which he meant to work, the peasant felled with an axe the whole of the timber. Having accomplished this part of his task, he abandoned the ground until the spring of the following year. He then lopped off the branches from the fallen trunks, put the finest pieces on one side, and formed with the rest and the detached branches, piles arranged in regular rows on the surface of the ground. He next set them alight, and the conflagration, spreading to the mosses and the roots, finished by covering the

whole space. Thick, heavy clouds of smoke blotted out the light, often producing temporary darkness. The fires scintillated like so many stars across the gloom, and a reddish light played in and out amongst the billows of the smoke. When all had been burned and the fire had been extinguished, it became easy to pass the plough over the ground and to sow almost immediately with oats. In spite of the presence of stumps of trees that the fire had been unable to consume, and the enormous quantity of rocks and stones that had been deposited in early times by the glaciers, this first sowing procured a harvest sufficiently great to supply the cattle with food during the following winter. The year afterwards the ground was re-ploughed and sowed, and a second but diminished harvest was obtained.

According to Galitzin, the field was then abandoned and allowed to recover itself with young shoots and weeds, and he remarks that in such a case the new shrubs always belonged to various deciduous species, such as the alder and the birch, and not to the coniferous varieties which existed before the burning. When the peasant had obtained sufficient money, usually by means of a loan from the local bank, he commenced the second period of his work. Assisted by several good workmen all armed with crowbars and pickaxes, he attacked the enormous stumps which had resisted the fire, and rooted them up one after the other. From the stumps they passed to the stones, and those which were too heavy to be displaced, formed the nuclei of so many pyramids made by piling up the smaller stones round them. It was only after all the stones had been lifted that the peasant definitely set to work to sow barley and rye.

Galitzin's notes were made in 1847, and he does not appear to be aware of the fact that it was also a common custom to burn the ground, reap three harvests from it in succession, and then burn down another patch without any attempt to remove all the stones and permanently cultivate the clearing.

Some people have attempted to prove that this method of cultivation was introduced by the Swedes, basing their argument on the word *Sved*, but in the *Kalevala* we have an account of similar burnings, proving that the method is in all senses of the word a primitive one. According to the legend, Väinämöinen was wandering about on the shores of the "Blue Sea" when he found seven grains which he intended to sow in a wooded district. He was, however, warned by a bird that his labour would be in vain unless he first cleared the forest. He accordingly felled all the trees with the exception of a single birch, which he left as a resting-place for the birds. The eagle, who had been watching Väinämöinen's operations with some degree of apprehension, was so pleased by the forethought of this first farmer, that he kindled a flame for him which burnt all the trees to ashes. Väinämöinen then sowed the seven seeds, which he had carefully enclosed in skins, at the same time piously praying to the goddess of the earth and the supreme deity, Ukko.

" Ancient goddess, who art dwelling
In the depth, the great earth-mother;
Let the turf put forth its vigour,
Let the soil exert its forces.
For the pow'er in earth that dwelleth
Well I know will never fail me,

G

If the daughters of creation
 With their kind assistance bless me.
 Earth, awoken from thy slumber,
 Thou domain of the Creator;
 Let the many stalks thou bearest
 With a thousand ears grow fruitful,
 Through my labour, through my sowing,
 For my toil is very heavy.
 Ukko, thou great God above me,
 Thou, O Father in the heavens,
 Who amid the clouds art dwelling,
 And canst guide them at thy pleasure,
 Oh, direct them, in thy wisdom,
 From the north, and from the north-east;
 From the west, too, send them hither,
 And before them come the south wind.
 Send the rain from thy high heaven;
 Let the heavy clouds drop heavy,
 That the ears may rise in vigour,
 That the grain may cheerly rustle." [c]

Väinämöinen's prayer was granted, the seed grew,
 and spring came heralded by the cuckoo, who wished to
 know why the one birch-tree was left standing. To
 this question Väinämöinen replied—

"Cuckoo I have left this birch-tree
 As a place for pleasant warbling;
 Let thy voice be heard, O cuckoo,
 Freely sing from throat melodious,
 Sweetly sing with voice of silver,
 Sing at morning, sing at evening,
 Sing amid the heat of noontide,—
 As a blessing to my labour,
 That the wood may better flourish,
 That the corn may be abundant." [c]

The *sved* method of cultivation being obviously a
 wasteful one, the Government attempted, some hundreds
 of years ago, to put a stop to it. In many districts they



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SVED (AFTER JÄRNEFELT)

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have been quite successful, but the method still exists in certain areas, though controlled by laws which regulate the intervals between successive burnings of the same ground and the number of crops that may be reaped after the burning.

The old plough, still to be seen in the north and east, was nothing but two long forks which moved the earth without turning it over. Another primitive implement, also still in use, was the branch-harrow, made of branches of trees. The pegs that scratch the ground are not separate pieces fastened into the horizontal ones, but part and parcel of the same branch.

Finnish horses are noted for their speed, strength and patience, and are rightly much prized by their peasant owners. "To go like the wind or a Kuopio horse" is a common saying that celebrates the fleetness of one special kind of breed. At one time, Finnish trotting-horses were sent over to Sweden and almost invariably won. To put a stop to this, the Swedes deliberately raised the height of the competing horses, and so, in a very unsportsmanlike manner, got rid of their competitors.

Sheep are not common, and on the large farms they have given way to the more profitable cow. The poorer peasants, however, generally increase the size of their flocks as they become more and more prosperous.

There are roughly, about one and a half million men, one and a half million women and one and a half million cows, so that almost every man ought to be able to find a wife and own a cow, if things were evenly distributed. No exception need be taken to this grouping, for the Finns themselves are fond of saying, "Be a cow and you will be taken care of; but a man or a horse has nothing

to hope for." This is not true as regards either the man or the horse, but it shows the value placed on the cow. The number of cattle has increased rapidly, and some attention has been given to the improvement of native breeds, and also to the importation of suitable breeds from Scotland. The experiments in both directions have not always been attended with complete success. The first batch of Ayrshire cattle was presented by the Government to several large landed proprietors, who found that these animals were well suited to the pasture land of the country. The Government thereupon resolved to purchase another batch, but they instructed their agent not to pay more than fifteen pounds per head, and the consequence was that he visited only the smaller farms and bought only inferior oxen. On their arrival in Finland they were sold by public auction, but they fetched such high prices that the smaller landholders were unable to purchase. To make matters worse, tuberculosis immediately appeared amongst the cattle, and the Ayrshire variety lost a little in favour.

When the cattle are grazing they are usually tended by a boy, who spends a part of his time playing on a little reed-pipe, the sound of which is said to be a sufficiently powerful deterrent to any bear with an appetite for beef. At other times an old woman may be seen on duty, sitting knitting by the roadside while her few cows graze peacefully close at hand.

At Valamo, a Finnish island in Lake Ladoga, there is a breed of cows that is always milked by the monks. They so seldom see a woman that when they do, they are seized with fright. This peculiar aversion to women-kind has become practically hereditary. Though they be

taken, as young calves, to the mainland, they will never allow themselves, as adult cows to be milked by a dairy-maid.

The most important feature of Finnish farm life is the growth of the dairy business. This has been accompanied by a decrease in the amount of butter and cheese exported, due to the difficulty of supplying the needs of the expanding population.

Finnish butter possesses quite a long history, the early Christian bishops having more than once spoken of the excellent quality of that paid to the priests as part of their salary, by the peasants of the various parishes. Until 1884, the export varied considerably from time to time, and was never very great. But in that year the example of Denmark was followed in many respects; scientific methods and the latest machinery were adopted, and now the butter trade is a considerable source of wealth.

Numerous steam-creameries have been established throughout the country, and the bulk of the milk from all the small farms is sent to them for conversion into butter. In these creameries the machinery, Finnish, English or Danish, as the case may be, is the best obtainable. Scandinavian separators are in use, the furnace being tended by a boy dressed in linen overalls. The dairymaids, in spotless white linen dresses and aprons, receive, weigh and sterilise the milk before it is made into butter. All the churning, scalding and butter-packing rooms are models of cleanliness, and the product commands a high price in the markets to which it is exported.

At Hangö, the "butter-port," a large creamery was established that bought frozen cream from farms hundreds

of miles away. Once a week, the cream of a whole neighbourhood, frozen into a soft mass, was taken to the railway station and sent to the south. In this way the expense of transport was reduced to a minimum. The recent and remarkable development of co-operative dairies has, however, now put an end to this enterprise by rendering it unnecessary.

In summer the visitor to Finland disembarks at one of three ports, Åbo, Hangö or Helsingfors. In the winter, when the gulf is held in the grip of the frost, steamers can reach Åbo or Hangö, but only by means of ice-breakers.

At Hangö, a small town at the extreme south of the country, the Government has established a State Butter Warehouse, that has already had important and beneficial commercial results. Besides being an important port, Hangö is also a fashionable seaside resort. In July the place is full of rich Russians, who divide their time between the Bathing Establishment, the Park and the Kurhaus. Their advent has done something to disfigure the originally quiet and picturesque little spot, but if their number increased a hundredfold, they could not damage the wonderful purity and freshness of the air. Behind the town there are extensive woods where the birch-tree and the pine stand silently amidst the carpet of the heather, each one doing its best, in Nature's usual way, to oust the others and get all the best breathing places for itself. There is a glorious bay with a wide, sandy beach, encircled by a fence of dusky pines, and dotted with tiny islands that form ideal resorts for young people who want to play at Robinson Crusoe, or for those still younger people who are in the initial stages of the

honeymoon, and never knew they were so young before.

Ladies in silken gown and satin shoon trip to and fro amongst the pines and over the sands. They cannot shake off the town even in this spot. For them, and such as they, there is liveliness in abundance, but away where the strains of the band and the frou-frou of the petticoats is not heard, there is solitude enough to satisfy the severest recluse.

Towards September the fine folk depart, the gaily painted and artistic wooden villas are shuttered and barred, the Kurhaus is closed. The season is over and the fashionable world departs, even though the hot sun still beats fiercely on the beach, the heather-bells are still a-ringing, and the fragrant pines are scattering their perfume over land and sea.

It is at such a spot that the steamer calls to pick up emigrants and butter. Hundreds of neat white barrels are rolled on board and stowed carefully below. What becomes of it all? Danish butter is common enough in our shops; Finnish butter is unknown, and yet these vessels unload their cargo at Hull! Perhaps it becomes Danish as it passes Copenhagen. Does it by a similar metamorphosis become English at Hull?

The emigrants are not such a pleasant sight as the butter. I have a moment of intense regret when I think of the crowd of exiles collected like sheep at the emigrant offices, and marched in a straggling line to the boat where passports, tickets and goods were examined as though they belonged to beasts. Hope shone in the faces of some; sorrow dimmed the eyes of many; while the sturdy indifference of the very young to the ties

that had been broken and the dangers that had to be faced was in its way more pathetic than the grief of those who wept.

Many of those who were faring forth were decorated with flowers, the simple farewell gifts of friends. Men, women and children had wreaths upon their heads, wreaths round their necks, and long sprays pinned to coat and jacket, till they looked like so many walking advertisements for an enterprising horticulturalist. There was one young man who appeared a tremendous favourite. Girl after girl sought him out and pinned on another rose. One modest-looking maid timidly drew him out of the crowd for a minute to say her last word to him all by herself. But the other young women would have none of it, and buzzed around him like a lot of bees. He was not good-looking or of fine physique, but there was a very merry twinkle in his eye, and, judging by the looks of those he left behind, perhaps it was a merciful dispensation of Providence that packed him off to another land. Out of sight, out of mind, and by this time, I have no doubt that the Finnish girls are pinning flowers on some other equally gay and attractive Lothario.

CHAPTER VI

IN A FINNISH VILLAGE

LIFE, in the capitals of civilised countries, tends to become much the same everywhere. Churches, theatres, museums, art-galleries, cafés and hotels so closely resemble each other that they may almost be said to be denationalised. This not to say that the atmosphere of Paris is as that of London, but in neither capital are the rich or the poor really representative of their motherland. It is only in villages and in the smaller country towns that the life that is distinctly characteristic of a nation is usually to be found. In these places, old customs linger longer, and new ones are more slowly adopted than in the great cities whose very existence depends to some extent upon their cosmopolitan character. Under the heading, therefore, of "A Finnish Village," we would make some attempt to describe certain fairly common features of life as it is or has been lived amongst the country people.

The original dwelling of the Finn was a tent, and to this day his expression "to go home," means literally, "to go to the tent." When the transition was made from a nomadic life with tents to a settled one with fixed houses it is impossible to determine, but what those first houses must have been like we have some evidence in

the rough, simple homes of the poorest of the peasants in the north, the "smoke-cottages" to which we have already referred. Nothing could be much rougher or simpler. The walls are of entire logs; the floors are roughly hewn fir-planks; the dwelling is full of smoke that tries to escape through the smoke-opening in the roof. In the wall there are a few light-holes, one or two of which are without window-panes and are used indifferently as entrances for air or firewood. The hearth is of massive stones brought from the field. "The enormous log of pine-wood which burns there the live-long day, and in the winter twilight casts its wavering brightness over the black walls, and still blacker floor—the blazing spales, everywhere stuck in crevices of the wall, or in frame-stands made to hold them; and finally, the women by the light of this weird illumination, busy at their household cleaning, or kneading dough, the men whittling at snow-shoes, or a sledge, or suchlike, the beggar stretched out on the hearth-stone, the children in a heap in front of the fire, laughing at the chirping of the crickets, or crawling on the floor, crying out, and wrestling with one another—the horse at the manger containing chopped straw—by the entrance to the house the sociable hen going about pecking the ground for crumbs with her cackling brood: all this is not a picture of the present, but is rather an embodiment of the olden times, and the illusion will be only slightly disturbed by two new discoveries which may be made in the old dwelling—the distaff, with its busy humming-wheel, and the hymn-book lying on the smoky bookshelf. The perpetual drafts of air in these huts bring fresh atmosphere, and the wanderer who comes in from the

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IN THE CHIMNEY CORNER

desolate snow-covered waste, finds them welcome and pleasant resting-places" (Brown).

Very few of these houses are now to be found. They have given way to houses with chimneys and windows. Horses and other quadrupeds have been turned out, though the hen often tries to make good her right of entry.

When further advances are made in the character of the dwelling, they are usually in the way of size, the material of which they are constructed being still of wood. The roof is covered with small flat pieces of pine-wood, which, under the influence of the atmosphere, take on a soft, bluish-grey hue, that makes them, even at close quarters, almost indistinguishable from slate.

Thousands of the homesteads are painted or stained a bright red, and the window-sashes are painted white. The larger the window-sash the richer the peasant. Double windows are common on account of the intense cold of winter, but blinds are rarely seen, so that firelight and sunlight render reciprocal service to the locality, the one shedding a cheery glow over the frozen streets in the dark months, and the other bathing the interior of the houses during the bright ones. In one corner of the room is the huge brick stove, which may either reach from floor to ceiling, or be only a few feet high, when its broad flat top is the cosiest spot in the house. The open rafters of the roof serve as a combined wardrobe, larder, store-cupboard and general receptacle for fishing-tackle and gardening implements.

Opinion seems to differ as to the cleanliness of these dwellings. One writer states that cleanliness is the predominant note, and that even if there be but one room available for all purposes, there is neither dirt nor

litter; while another remarks that there is everywhere a decided want of fresh air and a superabundance of dirt. The truth, probably, lies somewhere between the two opinions. Certain it is that Russian influence means dirt, and that the farther east you get from Viborg the greater the change for the worse. The present writer, judging, it is true, from only a limited acquaintance with the homes of the peasant population, is inclined to believe that, on the whole, the Finns are amongst the cleanest people in Europe, not only in their persons, as will be presently demonstrated, but also in their homes.

Most country houses are only one storey high and have the rooms opening one into the other. Great precautions are taken against fire, and a ladder against the roof and leading direct to the street, is compulsory. All towns possess well-equipped fire-stations, a conspicuous feature of which is the tall tower where the watchman is always on duty to detect the outbreak of a conflagration. In Nyslott, somewhat amusing precautions are taken to prevent the watchman from falling asleep during the night. The town possesses a big clock that strikes every quarter of an hour. It is the business of the watchman to wait till the sound of the clock has died away, and then to repeat immediately the same number of strokes on a metal triangle. There is something half pathetic, half ludicrous, in the feeble tinkle of the triangle after the deep booming of the bell.

Writing in 1847, Prince Galitzin says that there existed in the towns of Finland an ancient custom which was very useful, namely, that *klokans*¹ or night-watchmen

¹ This is the word used by Galitzin, but it is neither Swedish nor Finnish.

had to go through the different quarters after dark. These *klokans* were subordinate officials, charged by the municipal authority to look after the security of the streets and to signal the least indication of fire. They walked habitually two by two through the whole extent of the quarter to which they were appointed. Instituted in the Middle Ages, these criers preserved in several towns the singular costume of a distant epoch. They wore a kind of long hanging cape of grey over the back, and on the head a broad-brimmed hat decorated with a metal band of great size, bearing the arms of the town. They held a strong stick in the right hand and a rattle in the left. Accoutred in this fashion, the criers set out when night fell, and recited as they walked, in a kind of sing-song tone, a number of ancient couplets whose object was to force "late birds" to enter their houses and to invite those who were already at home to put out all fires. The chant was repeated every quarter of an hour until the dawn, and to those who were not accustomed to the noise, it was absolutely insupportable. Most unfortunate was the traveller whom the hotel proprietor placed in a room facing the street. Hardly had he closed his eyes than the rattle woke him with a start. When a fire burst out anywhere these gentlemen made a terrible tumult. No sooner did the fire show itself than the rattles of all the watchmen who were spread about the town were set in motion. The noise which they made was so tremendous that there was no sleeper, no matter how profound might be the depth of his slumbers, that could resist their appeal to awake. Everybody hurried to go out to aid in extinguishing the conflagration in the threatened district.

There is told, on the subject of the *klokans*, a rather amusing story. Several young and rather riotous students met one night at a late hour, in one of the cafés of Helsingfors, when a watchman happened to pass. Perceiving a light through the shutters of the window, and his chant not effecting their disappearance, he thought it his duty to enter the café in all the glory of his great-coat and his big hat, to order the proprietor to turn his guests into the street. The young men took the matter into their own hands and invited the newcomer to sit down at the table with them and take a drink of punch. The poor man accepted the offer with glee, for it was in the depth of winter and he was benumbed with the cold. One glass succeeded another; strong brandy was added to the fuming beverage, and the watchman soon drank himself under the table. At that moment the hair-brained youths lifted him up and placed him in a large sledge which belonged to one of them. The sledge set off rapidly, soon covered more than forty versts, and arrived at the next town. Here the drunken watchman was lifted out of the vehicle and put right in the middle of the deserted market-place.

When the dawn arrived and buyers and sellers began to meet upon the square, considerable surprise was manifested at the appearance of a man so strangely attired, and stretched out asleep upon the stones, for the ancient costume and the rattle had long been abandoned by this particular town. One man shook the sleeper, who, still heavy with the fumes of the punch, at last awoke. The worst of it was, that, believing himself still at Helsingfors, and not having yet properly opened his eyes, he began to intone in a strident voice his habitual chant,

accompanying it with the noise of the rattle. The inhabitants, thinking they had a madman to deal with, and wishing at all costs to get rid of him, could think of nothing better than to conduct the unfortunate watchman to the house of the mayor, where, before he could regain his liberty, he had to relate in full the adventures of the previous evening.

The furniture of the smaller houses is uncomfortable, and not beautiful. It is of local wood and often of home manufacture. Hard, straight benches do duty for seats, and some of the beds are not much more than rushes on planks. In order to economise space, during the daytime many of the beds are of telescopic pattern and are shut up when the sleeper arises. They look like low wardrobes with one large drawer. The drawer encloses a mattress, upon which the sheets and blankets are spread when the bed is made.

If the house has any pretensions to social standing, the chief article of furniture is a sofa, some of which are over twelve feet in length. "The reason of this unusual length is that the sofa, even to this day, is the place of honour, and a lady entitled to the rank of taking her place on the sofa, would consider herself insulted if her hostess asked her to take her place elsewhere.

"In the smallest provincial town a hostess can never have a sofa too large for her requirements if she desires to keep on amicable terms with all her neighbours.

"The right-hand corner is the Holy of Holies, and is always reserved for the governor's wife, if she graces an assembly with her presence. Beside her would sit the wife of the official next highest in rank. Official rank has since time immemorial taken precedence in Finland.

An unmarried lady under no provocation would be tempted to seat herself on the sofa, it being considered the height of indecorum to do so, as well as being a sure and certain sign that she would remain a spinster to the end of her days.

"Needless to say, a mere man would be hounded out of the room if he even attempted to commit such an appalling breach of etiquette."¹

The food of the peasant is not very varied. Bread, which is made of rye, is in many places baked only twice a year. Even when fresh it makes serious demands on the teeth, and when six months stale it must be practically impossible for people with weak or defective dental apparatus to properly masticate it. The loaves are round, hard and flat, and look like quoits or iron rings. Each is pierced with a hole, so that it can be slung on a pole and stored in the roof. The bread is sour in taste, but this is considered a delicacy, and ordinary white bread is universally voted insipid. When the harvests fail the flour is mixed with chopped straw and bark.

But if the peasant loaf makes no appeal to the palate of the Englishman, the coffee, whenever and wherever obtained, will be pronounced of supreme excellence. Rap at the door of some *Kahvila* or café, perhaps a mere hut on the outskirts of the forest, and ask for coffee. It will probably be served in a metal coffee-set, carried on a metal tray, and will be accompanied by a number of small cakes. If you are not too hungry, you will divide your admiration between the daintiness and the cleanliness of the manner of serving the repast and the

¹ Paul Wainemann, *A Summer Tour in Finland*—but the account is rather exaggerated.

truly exquisite flavour of the coffee and the richness of the cream. The peasants of Finland are, according to one writer, "amateurs passionés de café," and that to such an extent that the poorest of them will deprive himself of necessities to satisfy his craving. The peasants always drink it with the excellent cream that is found throughout the country, and of which the delicate taste is due to the quality of the pasturage.

Fish is plentiful, but beef, mutton and pork are by no means common articles of diet amongst the poor. The fish is eaten fresh, dried, smoked, salted, raw, and in almost every conceivable fashion. Raw smoked salmon and salt fish are popular with all classes, and raw un-smoked salmon with a little pepper and salt is considered a most appetising delicacy.

The first or early breakfast is of coffee and bread; a second or heavier breakfast is taken between ten and twelve; dinner is from three to five in the afternoon and supper from eight onwards. These are the usual hours at hotels and restaurants. The visitor who does not wish to eat three heavy meat meals a day, can, in the larger towns, arrange his meal-times to suit himself, by lunching or dining *a la carte*. In the country this is not always possible, and one must either suffer patiently or make some sort of compromise between hunger and indigestion.

The various rooms of all kinds of houses often contain an abundance of fresh flowers or of flowering plants. The love for flowers is a strongly marked characteristic of all sections of the community.

Different travellers have described the peasants' dwellings as being infested with all kinds of disagreeable

crawling creatures. There has, doubtless, been a great deal of exaggeration over this matter, though it is pretty certain that, where the houses and furniture are all of wood, certain varieties of unpleasant forms of life will find convenient breeding-grounds. In summer, mosquitoes become a perfect terror, and the peasants, at evening-time, burn twigs of juniper in order to drive the little fiends away with the smoke.

Tacitus, writing about the year A.D. 100, gives us some information about the Finns. According to him the dress of the people in those days was made from the untanned skins of wild beasts. He was probably confusing the Lapps and the Finns, for many of the old Runes refer to the Finns being clad in woollen clothes like the forest in hoar-frost. Native costumes, of a less primitive kind, are now rarely met with, but in some parts of Karelen and elsewhere the national dress of the men is a long white frieze coat, short knee-breeches, and a close-fitting head-cap, the latter being made of six differently coloured wedge-shaped pieces. This curious head-gear has almost everywhere given way to more modern hats and caps, and the white frieze coat has been replaced by blue.

Vests and jackets of all colours are worn, but the favourite colour of the vest is red, for the Finns, in common with most other northern nations, have a particular fondness for this colour. The short knee-breeches have become trousers, and the old coloured girdle has been replaced by a simple leathern belt with brass buckles, from which are suspended two or three knives. Most men and boys carry a sheathed knife called a *punkko*, which hangs from the belt. It is encased in a leathern sheath which is often prettily ornamented with patterns

in coloured leather or in brass, and it is always tipped with brass. The *puukko* is a formidable weapon in the hands of an angry man, and many have been the fatal blows given in moments of excitement.

There are three articles that may be said to be distinctly national as far as the dress of the men is concerned. These are (1) the *puukko*, (2) the *pieksut*, a soft and comfortable covering for the feet; and (3) the *mekko* or linen blouse which ought to be white, but rarely is so. When a Finn is in a good humour he wears his cap straight on his head; if it be worn sideways trouble is possible.

Finnish women are supposed to wear only black or dark-coloured garments once they have passed their girlhood, and black is the regulation finery for weddings and Sundays. But this devotion to sombre hues is not indulged in by the young, nor, for the matter of that, by many of the older women of more modern ideas. In the stories of the *Kalevala* there is unmistakable evidence that the women were fond of smart clothes and ornaments. One heroine is reported to have had four chests of clothes, and in the best of these were six girdles of gold and seven blue skirts. She wore seven ornaments in her hair, blue ribbons and golden spangles on her forehead, pearls round her neck, a silver cross on her bosom and gold rings on her fingers.

As a rule Finnish women plait their hair and tie it up with coloured ribbons; the young girls tie it simply with a small black or red band, and either cut their fair hair short, or wear it falling freely about the neck. When they marry, the head is covered, a small hood or silk handkerchief being wound about it with becoming effect. They wear a short jacket and under this a closely-fitting

bodice. The costume is completed by a woollen skirt with edging of red, blue or green.

Goloshes of two varieties are used by everybody, one kind for summer and another for winter, and one of the most curious sights in the entrance hall of a big hotel is the hundreds of pigeon-holes provided for goloshes. The slightest drop of rain is a sufficient excuse for the adoption of overshoes. They are deposited at the entrance to a public building as naturally, if less reverentially, as a Mahomedan removes his boots at a temple door. The initials of the owner are placed inside the sole in big brass letters, so that he can readily distinguish his own footwear amongst those arranged around the entrance.

There is no house so small but it has a bath-house, for personal cleanliness occupies the first place in the list of Finnish virtues. The bath-house is built separate from the dwelling-house, on a foundation of stones. The walls are of pine-logs, and the roof is thatched or tiled, and covered with moss. The baths are what are called Russian baths. On one side of the room is the stove or oven, built of rough stones from the field. On the other side there is a series of wooden platforms. Every evening in summer and every Saturday evening in winter the bath-room is prepared for use. A fire of wood is lighted in the stove, and when it has burned out and there is no smoke, several bucketfuls of water are poured upon it, and in the steam thus produced the Finn lays himself on the platform, choosing one at a height which will give him a temperature to his liking. The heat to an Englishman is intolerable, but to a Finn it is the greatest possible luxury. The whole family takes the bath in company, father and mother, brother and sister, and often

the guests as well, both male and female, though this custom has died out except in the most remote districts, where, however, it is still common. As the bathers lie upon their couches they beat themselves with bunches of small birch-twigs to produce perspiration and encourage circulation. The bath-whisks are made of birch-twigs which are gathered in summer when the leaves are soft. They are steeped in hot water to make them pliable and fragrant, and their perfume is not one of the least of the delights of the Finnish bath. The floor of the house is strewn with straw, in which the younger fry disport themselves, dancing about and flogging each other with the birch-twigs. When the body has been sufficiently heated and switched, it is rubbed all over with soap and then massaged, the latter operation being always performed by a woman. This is followed by a plunge in the cool lake in the summer, or by a roll in the snow in winter. In the evening it is no uncommon sight to see a row of naked men sitting outside the house, having just completed their cold plunge. One result of this and similar habits is the strengthening of the physique. It is true that many children die in childhood, but those that survive are completely hardened.

The bath is also used medically, being considered beneficial in all cases of fever, and an almost unfailing antidote for all the bodily ills that Finnish flesh is heir to. "Where brandy and the bath prove unavailing, death is at the door."

In town, the bath-rooms are heated by steam produced in a boiler by a stove in the room. In this case the mixed bathing common in the remote country has entirely disappeared, but the work of switching and massage is

still performed by women. There is something refreshing in the thought that on Saturday evening every single person in the whole length and breadth of the land is clean. Even the beggar and the outcast find some way or other of obtaining this form of weekly "tub."¹ I doubt if there be any other country in the world where this can be said.

In view of what we have just been saying, the following extract from the *Kalevala* is not without interest. One of the heroes, Ilmarinen, is about to set out to obtain a bride, and he calls upon his sister to prepare his bath and his bridal attire.

" Said the smith, said Ilmarinen,
' Anniki, my little sister,
I will forge you now a shuttle,
Pretty rings to deck your fingers,
Golden earrings, two or three pairs,
Five or six linked girdles make you.
Warm for me the pleasant bath-room,
Fill the room with fragrant vapour,
Let the logs you burn be small ones,
And the fire with chips be kindled,
And prepare me too some ashes,
And some soap in haste provide me,
That I wash my head and cleanse it,
And I may make white my body
From the coal-dust of the autumn,
From the forge throughout the winter.'

Anniki, whose name was famous,
Heated secretly the bath-room,
With the boughs the wind had broken,
And the thunderbolt had shattered.
Stones she gathered from the river,
Heated them till they were ready,

¹ It is said that there is a Finnish bath in London somewhere in Aldgate.

Cheerfully she fetched the water,
From the holy well she brought it,
Broke some bath-whisks from the bushes,
Charming bath-whisks from the thickets,
And she warmed the honeyed bath-whisks,
On the honeyed stones she warmed them,
Then with milk she mixed the ashes,
And she made him soap of marrow,
And she worked the soap to lather,
Kneaded then the soap to lather,
That his head might cleanse the bridegroom,
And might cleanse himself completely.

Then the smith, e'en Ilmarinen,
He the great primæval craftsman,
Wrought the maiden what she wished for,
And he wrought a splendid head-dress,
While she made the bath-room ready,
And she put the bath in order.
In her hands he placed the trinkets,
And the maiden thus addressed him :
' Now the bath-room's filled with vapour,
And the vapour-bath I've heated,
And have steeped the bath-whisks nicely,
Choosing out the best among them.
Bathe, O, brother, at your pleasure,
Pouring water as you need it,
Wash your head to flaxen colour,
Till your eyes shine out like snowflakes.'

Then the smith, e'en Ilmarinen,
Went to take the bath he needed,
There he bathed himself at pleasure,
And he washed himself to whiteness,
Washed his eyes until they sparkled,
And his temples till they glistened,
And his neck to hen's-egg whiteness,
And his body all was shining.
From the bath the room he entered,
Changed so much they scarcely knew him,
For his face it shone with beauty,
And his cheeks were cleansed and rosy.

Then he spoke the words which follow :
' Anniki, my little sister,
Bring me now a shirt of linen,

And the best of raiment bring me,
That I robe myself completely,
And may deck me like a bridegroom.'

Anniki, the ever famous,
Brought him then a shirt of linen,
For his limbs no longer sweating,
For his body all uncovered.
Then she brought well-fitting trousers,
Which his mother had been sewing,
For his hips no longer sooty,
And his legs were fully covered.

Then she brought him finest stockings,
Which, as maid, had wove his mother,
And with these his shins he covered,
And his calves were hidden by them.
Then she brought him shoes that fitted,
Best of Saxon boots she brought him,
And with these the stockings covered
Which his mother sewed as maiden;
Then a coat of blue she chose him,
With a liver-coloured lining,
Covering thus the shirt of linen
Which of finest flax was fashioned,
Then an overcoat of woollen,
Of four kinds of cloth constructed,
O'er the coat of bluish colour,
Of the very latest fashion,
And a new fur, thousand-buttoned,
And a hundred-fold more splendid,
O'er the overcoat of woollen,
And the cloth completely hiding;
Round his waist a belt she fastened,
And the belt was gold-embroidered,
Which his mother wrought as maiden,
Wrought it when a fair-haired maiden,
Brightly-coloured gloves she brought him,
Gold-embroidered for his fingers,
Which the Lapland children fashioned;
On his handsome hands she drew them,
Then a high-crowned hat she brought him
(On his golden locks she placed it)
Which his father once had purchased,
When as bridegroom he adorned him."

The Finnish poet Runeberg has given a very interesting sketch of the home-life of the Finn in the interior of the country. Speaking of the inhabitants of the windowless, chimneyless cottages, he says that there was always to be found the beggar and the *inhysing*. "Both of these are such regular and well-defined members of the household, that we must treat of them somewhat at length. The *inhysing*, or lodger, is the second swallow of the Finns. As the swallow finds a place for herself and her belongings under the roof of the peasant, so does the *inhysing*, and he gives himself up, as does the swallow, to what the day may bring.

"The recompense which he presents, by a well-understood arrangement, consists for the most part in casting in the wood through the hole in the hut appropriated to this purpose; his other services for the good of the house are more of an exceptional kind. Such an one, if he does not give himself to any handicraft, takes to fishing and hunting, and avails himself further of opportunity as little permitted as forbidden, to practise *Svedjande* on the lands of the property, that is to burn the bushes and herbage, and so prepare the ground for being sown, he taking for himself the produce. If he happens to possess a cow, this grazes with the cows of the peasant, and is just as privileged an *inhysing* in their cow-house as its owner in the corner of the house itself. As his wants are few, and through the inherent good-nature of the peasant the cost for these still smaller, it is plain that he, more than any other, yields to the common liking of the Finns for comfort and ease. One sees him, accordingly, occupied in winter in resting on a seat on the hearth, or in summer in the fields enjoying the sunshine. Beyond

all doubt, the multitude of such *inhysing* is not only injurious to agriculture in general, but also to those under whose roof he shelters himself. But the noble spirit of the common man manifests itself also in this—that without other recompense than has been indicated, the peasant shares his confined dwelling, and his often very limited supply of food, with these his brothers, who are without house or home of their own.”¹

A second person never wanting in the peasant's house twenty-five years ago was the beggar. He was not, indeed, a permanent resident, but came and went; and there rarely passed a day in which the houses and farmyards on the public road, or near it, had not a visit from one or more of these. Thus was one reminded of the well-known words of the poet Stagnelius: “The idea is everlasting, the forms only change.” The beggar was not in the least despised or looked down upon. Guided by a god, as was the beggar of Homer, he wandered, often with wife and children, from house to house. Everywhere he was treated as a guest, and not as one who ate the bread of charity. The hearth had warmth for him, as for all; he asked for nothing, every one knew his necessities, and went about to satisfy them, as far as he could. No meat, rejected by others, was set before him; he ate with the inhabitants of the house of the best which it afforded, the only food which they had. He told stories, if he had any to tell; if he were disposed to laugh, he laughed; his children, if he brought any with him, played with the children of the family. At night he went to rest wherever he found a quiet place on the hearth or bench; he was of a pleasant, accommodating

¹ Quoted by J. C. Brown in his *People of Finland*.

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BREAD STALL, HELSINGFORS



[To face p. 107]

VILLAGE WELL

spirit; should another have already obtained the best place, and should he then be fortunate enough to obtain it, no one thought of bidding him move. When he wished to go further, or if he, or any one belonging to him, were sick, forthwith the peasant, in accordance with old usage, harnessed his horse, and drove him or the sick member of his family, willingly and without any fuss, to the next steading.

In this way did the beggar live at one time in the interior of Finland. He ate of the bark of trees when the peasant did so; if the peasant ate white bread, he did the same.

Water is obtained from the lakes and rivers or else from wells. It is raised from the wells in much the same way as has been practised all over the East from time immemorial. On the end of a long lever there is a heavy lump of wood, which just overbalances the pail when full of water. The pail is attached to the other end of the lever by a series of jointed rods, rarely by rope or wire. The person who comes to draw water, pulls downwards on the rods till the bucket is full and then lets go. The water is lifted by the weighted end.

There are not many workhouses in Finland, and it is not a very unusual thing to find a pauper child in a peasant's cottage. Most of the paupers in Finland are people who were once well-to-do, or else farm labourers. The average peasant is intelligent and comparatively well off. He needs no system of poor relief. The paupers were formerly sold by auction to the one who would board them most cheaply, and a pauper who had been placed in one house one year might be removed to another house the next year if cheaper lodgings could be

found. This must have been somewhat disconcerting to the recipient of municipal charity, as he never knew upon what scale or in what direction his dietary would be likely to vary. He was expected to work for his landlord, and the services he rendered were in part a payment for benefits received. There are no longer any auctions, but boarding out is common. For the sake of the children we must welcome the change, for it must have been hard on the penniless, fatherless waifs, to have been bandied about from family to family, so that the virtues and charms of family life possessed no meaning for their little souls.

In every village there is a professional *masseuse*, and generally an *apoteh*. The apothecary is often as well qualified to give advice as a doctor, and is frequently consulted, especially when no medical man is resident in the locality. He is usually a flourishing man with a good share of this world's wealth, and holds an important social position, ranking with the clergyman, the doctor and the schoolmaster. He is invited at least once a year to the house of the chief resident, and is held in honour and respect. The profession of apothecary's assistant is occasionally undertaken by girls of good family, if they can pass the necessary but not difficult examinations. Owing, however, to the isolation and sometimes to the rough living, in towns or villages far away in the country, the post is not such a favourite one with the young ladies as that of a clerkship in bank or railway or post-office.

The masseuse is as invaluable and necessary as the bath. The Finn has not much belief in drugs, but he puts unbounded faith in the virtues of massage, tar—and witchcraft!

In the villages and provincial towns, curious signs are still in use outside the shops. The leather seller makes his whereabouts known by means of a brightly-painted piece of leather; the pork-butcher his, by means of brilliant representations of sausage, ham and pork. The invariable sign for the ordinary butcher is a leg of mutton; while the greengrocer hesitates between a bunch of carrots and a cauliflower. A brown knot—a roll of bread—is the sign of the baker; if he be a confectioner he will display a few cakes as well. The post-office is found by means of a posthorn. In Helsingfors and other large towns these signs are, unfortunately, disappearing.

CHAPTER VII

WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

IT will be as well to commence this chapter with an account of a wedding ceremony as given in the *Kalevala*, because, wherever there is anything curious in the modern way of celebrating the marriage rite, the peculiarity owes its origin to the practices of the people amongst whom the epic originated, practices which have, however, been subsequently much modified by the introduction of Christianity and the advance of civilisation. There has been, in most civilised countries, a tendency towards the simplification of essentials, and the limit in this direction in England is probably represented by the cold-blooded formalities of the registrar's office.

There lived in the wilds of Pohjola—Lapland—a young lady who is dignified with the title of the Beauteous Daughter of the Rainbow. Her two suitors included both Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen, whose acquaintance we have already made. It was to go a-wooing that Ilmarinen washed himself and put on his best clothes in the manner related in the last chapter. The mother of the beauteous maiden insisted on the suitors performing various difficult and hazardous enterprises, as a result of which, the minstrel went home disconsolate and the smith was left to enjoy the reward of his success.

We do not propose to tell in detail the story of the protracted ceremonies that were carried out, as that would

take us too far from our immediate purpose. But there are certain outstanding features that must be noticed. Those who are anxious to know more will find everything fully set forth in the nineteenth to the twenty-fifth Runes of the epic itself, a matter of over a hundred pages.

The first point to notice is the tremendous preparations made for the wedding feast. A bull of colossal dimensions was slaughtered.

“ Long his horns one hundred fathoms,
Muzzle broad as half a hundred,
For a week there ran an ermine
All along the yoke he carried,
All day long there flew a swallow
Twixt the mighty ox's horn-tips,
Striving through the space to hasten,
Nor found resting-place between them;
Month-long ran a summer squirrel
From his neck unto his tail-end,
Nor did he attain the tail-tip,
Till a month had quite passed over.”

Beer was brewed in vast quantities, and the origin of the brewing forms the subject of an interesting legend narrated by one of the persons present. The quantity of beer brewed was so great that it caused considerable changes in the surface of the land.

“ 'Twas for months the stones were glowing,
And for summers water boiling,
Trees were burning on the islands,
Water from the wells was carried.
Bare of trees they left the islands,
And the lakes were greatly shrunken,
For the ale was in the barrels
And the beer was stored securely
For the mighty feast of Pohja,
For carousing at the mansion.”

When all was ready the bridegroom and his party arrived

and were treated with abundance of food and drink. Stimulated by kindly feelings and strong liquor, the whole party sang and made merry and the spacious halls of the maiden's home resounded with song. So far there is little that is noticeably different from our own habits of feasting and merrymaking on similar occasions. But before the bride was allowed to depart from the home of her parents everything possible was done to turn the prevailing merriment into gloom. She was reminded of what a pleasant life she had hitherto led and informed how miserable she would be in the future.

“Hast thou never, youthful maiden,
On both sides surveyed the question,
Looked beyond the present moment,
When the bargain was concluded ?
All thy life must thou be weeping,
And for many years lamenting,
How thou left'st thy father's household,
And thy native land abandoned,
From beside thy tender mother,
From the home of she who bore thee.”

The bride replies in the same doleful strain—

“Blackest trouble rests upon me,
Black as coal my heart within me,
Coal-black trouble weighs upon me.”

An old crone who has long dwelt amongst them next relates a gruesome story of married life, and incidentally describes for us the custom of covering the head after marriage.

“Long as thou didst wear no head-dress,
Wert thou also free from trouble ;
When no linen veil waved round thee,
Thou wast also free from sorrow.

Now the head-dress brings thee trouble,
 Heavy thoughts the linen fabric,
 And the linen veil brings sorrow
 And the flax brings endless trouble."

Stanza after stanza commences with "Weep thou, weep thou, youthful maiden." It is all as doleful as a funeral. But all is not yet ended. There follow songs in which the bride is instructed how to conduct herself in her husband's house, and here we note very definite instructions as to how the girl is to behave towards her husband's people.

"Is the old man wolf in corner,
 By the hearth the crone a she-bear,
 Brother-in-law on step a viper,
 In the yard like nail the sister,
 Equal honour must thou give them,
 Deeper must thou then incline thee,
 Than thou bowed before thy mother,
 Than thou bowed before thy father
 Or before thy dearest mother."

Over and over again is the young bride told to respect the lightest word of her mother-in-law and to pay her most dutiful homage.

Next comes the turn of the bridegroom, who is cautioned not to ill-treat his wife unless necessary.

"Never may'st thou, luckless husband,
 Badly treat this beauteous damsel,
 Nor chastise her with the slave whip,
 Weeping 'neath the thongs of leather,
 'Neath the five-lashed whip lamenting,
 Out beyond the barn lamenting.
 Never was the maid afore-time,
 Never in her father's dwelling,
 With the slave-whip e'er corrected,

Stand thou like a post before her,
 Stand before her like a doorpost,

Do not let thy mother beat her,
Do not let thy father scold her,
Do not let the guests abuse her,
Do not let the neighbours blame her.
Drive the mobs away with whipping,
Beat thou other people only.
Do thou not oppress thy darling,
Nor chastise thy heart's beloved,
Whom for three long years thou waitedst,
She whom thou alone hast longed for.

Bridegroom, give thy bride instruction
And do thou instruct thy apple,
In the bed do thou instruct her,
And behind the door advise her,
For a whole year thus instruct her,
Thus by word of mouth advise her,
With thine eyes the next year teach her,
And the third year teach by stamping.

If to this she pays no heeding,
Nor concerns herself about it,
Choose a reed where reeds are growing,
From the heath fetch thou some horse-tail,
And with these correct the damsel.
In the fourth year thus correct her,
With the stalks then whip her lightly,
With the rough edge of the sedges,
But with whip-lash do not strike her,
Neither with the rod correct her.

If to this she pays no heeding,
Nor concerns herself about it,
Bring a switch from out the thicket,
In the dell select a birch-rod,
Underneath thy fur cloak hide it,
That the neighbour may not know it,
Let the damsel only see it;
Threaten her, but do not touch her.

If to this she pays no heeding,
Nor concerns herself about it,
With the switch correct the damsel,
With the birch-rod do thou teach her
But within the room four-cornered,
Or within the hut moss-covered.
Do not beat her in the meadow,

Do not whip her in the cornfield,
 Lest the noise should reach the village,
 And to other homes the quarrel,
 Neighbours' wives should hear the crying,
 And the uproar in the forest.

Always strike her on the shoulders,
 On her soft cheeks do not strike her,
 On her eyes forbear to strike her,
 On her ears forbear to touch her;
 Lumps would rise upon the temples,
 And her eyes with blue be bordered,
 And the brother-in-law would question,
 And the father-in-law perceive it,
 And the village ploughmen see it,
 And would laugh the village women."

This is followed by a story, rather trying for the bride, told by a beggar as to how he brought a troublesome wife into order.

"Never may'st thou, luckless husband,
 Listen to thy wife's opinion,
 Tongue of lark, and whim of women,
 Like myself, a youth unhappy,
 For both bread and meat I bought her,
 Bought her butter, ale I bought her,
 Bought her all sorts of provisions,
 Home-brewed ale the best I bought her,
 Likewise wheat from foreign countries.

But she let it not content her,
 Nor did it improve her temper,
 For one day the room she entered,
 And she grasped my hair, and tore it,
 And her face was quite distorted,
 And her eyes were wildly rolling,
 Always scolding in her fury,
 To her heart's contentment scolding,
 Heaping foul abuse upon me,
 Roaring at me as a sluggard.

But I knew another method,
 Knew another way to tame her,
 So I peeled myself a birch-shoot,
 When she came and called me birdie;

But when juniper I gathered,
Then she stooped, and called me darling;
When I lifted rods of willow,
On my neck she fell embracing."

Both the instruction about the beating and the story of the beggar may be mere banter, but they may also have been quite serious, for it is not so many years ago since it was lawful in England for a man to beat his wife provided the beating were not violent or cruelly inflicted.

The account in the *Kalevala* finishes with how the bride, bathed in tears, bade farewell to her home with sighs and groans and lamentations more befitting her departure for a prison than for the home of her beloved.

It will have been obvious from the above account that a good deal of sadness was prevalent at the ceremony, most of it probably assumed and yet not without a depressing effect. In the chapter that deals with the *Kalevala* it will be shown that much of the material out of which the epic in its present form was fashioned, was obtained in Karelen, and in that district the wedding festivities are of a most peculiar character, some of the ceremonies of primæval times being still in existence, side by side with importations from Russia and practices from the Greek church.

In the *Wide World Magazine* for July 1899 there was a description of the present form of the ritual by Miss Schlesinger, who entitled her article "The Quaintest Wedding in the World." The scene of the particular wedding described was a small village in the forest-land of Russian Karelen, just over the Finnish border, where the people, originally of Finnish stock, have come under the influence of Russia and her priests.

"Such a thing as a radiant bride is unknown in those regions, and the chief idea seems to be to make as great show of grief as possible and to make the function as dismal as a funeral." The shedding of tears and the doleful wailing are probably largely assumed, but they are orthodox and traditional, as we have already shown, and one is not sorry to hear that they are still preserved.

The initial stages include the settlement of the dowry and other mercenary transactions and wooing by proxy. When the preliminaries have been satisfactorily settled a solemn and formal appearance is made by the bridegroom, the parents and the spokesman. As the door of the house opens, the official wooer exclaims, "Formerly I came as a guest; now I come as a wooer."

Excitement manifests itself in the countenances and actions of all present. The guests are seated in the seats of honour and candles are lit before the sacred ikons of the Russian church, things unknown to the forefathers of the Finn. Further commercial details are settled with regard to dowry and the expenses of the wedding feast, and when all has been satisfactorily arranged, the young lady whose future has been so extensively discussed is summoned to hear the result.

The betrothal, which is regarded as being equally binding with the wedding ceremony, occurs just before the marriage itself. The day before the wedding is known as the "weeping day." "In the morning early the maiden, accompanied by her girl friends, sits on a seat in front of the house, while the professional wailers sing doleful laments. Then, rising and entering the house, she beseeches her brother to go fetch some firewood to heat the bath-house. With a voice choked with tears,

she next turns to her sister, begging her to make ready the bath, while a friend is told off to draw the water from the well."

While the bath is being prepared she sings a song the burden of which is, "Let me bathe for the last time to efface from my white body all traces of grief, and from my heart my ardent sorrow." The song is of great antiquity, one of those that have been handed down from generation to generation.

When the bride returns from the bath she enters the house in company with the chief wailer and is met by her brother, who holds an embroidered towel in one hand and a metal cup in the other. In this cup he offers his sister holy water to drive away any evil spirits that may have assembled in or around her during the bathing operations. The next person to arrive on the scene is the mother—in tears. She leads the party into another room, where, after turning to the east, all the women bow down, touching the ground with their foreheads, and praying for blessings on the bride. The men, meanwhile, stand in solemn silence.

The prayers and prostrations are succeeded by a feast, the chief dish at which is pancakes. "The future bridegroom is never present on this *weeping day*, which is devoted solely to bidding a mournful farewell to the happy girlhood of the maiden, and to indulgence in the joys of being miserable and making others miserable."

After the meal a round of visits to the houses of various relatives follows. The party consists of the bride, the wailer, the girl friends and a brother or two. At each house visited, a sad song announcing the reason of the visit is chanted, hot beer or wine being in the meantime

prepared to assuage the grief. On entering the house there are numerous ceremonial bows, prostrations, prayers and songs, and not till all these are finished can the warm refreshments be served. "After this sometimes the inmates bring presents to the bride—generally small coins of the realm—or else the company sits down to sew or play games; next follow more songs and bowings, and then the whole of this little comedy is repeated at the house of another relative.

"There seems to be a constant supply of tears laid on which never runs dry. The voices do not get hoarse, and the cakes, beer and sweetmeats never seem to pall, or the appetites to flag, however great the demands made upon them. Life seems a little short for a wedding of this kind, but after all it is a question of observing ancient traditions."

During the absence of the party the bride's mother has been engaged in the preparation of fresh supplies of refreshments, but when she hears her daughter returning, she goes forth to meet her and floods of tears course down the cheeks of all concerned.

"A climax is reached in these sad ceremonies when all these women-folk sit down to supper together and sing marriage songs. No man's presence is tolerated on these occasions—not even that of the ever-useful brother. All male folk are banished for the night. After the repast they adjourn to another part of the room shut off by a curtain, and the Liturgy of Tears begins."

On the wedding morning the sound of the bridegroom's approach is the signal for a curious ceremony. The bride is led into the open by the wailers and made to kneel upon a sheepskin. She touches the ground and the feet of

all present with her forehead, not forgetting the magician of the village who has come to banish evil spirits and ensure happiness to the wedded.

When these distressing prostrations have been accomplished, the bride retires to change her clothes and free herself from dust. While she is thus engaged, feasting goes on, and presently she is summoned to rejoin the company. She has her head covered by a thick shawl and is led forward by means of a handkerchief which she holds in her hand. This the bridegroom takes and leads her out into the yard, where he and she and a few select guests form a group that anxiously awaits the beneficent operations of the magician.

With a firebrand in one hand, and an axe in the other, he traces circles round the bridal party, muttering the while numerous magic formulæ in which he and they, like their ancestors of old, have the greatest belief.

The wedding procession to the bridegroom's own home resembles that at a funeral. The solemnity of the gloom is almost a catastrophe in itself.

"First walks the magician, followed by the bride's brothers—one of them carrying on his head a loaf of bread sewn up in a white damask cloth, together with a complete cover for one person, as a symbol of the maintenance now undertaken by the bridegroom. The latter leads the bride by means of the kerchief as before."

The church ceremony offers nothing worthy of comment, but the home-coming of the bride is peculiar. The wedding party seats itself anew at the table, and all weeping, whether sham or real, must now end. The magician pronounces his formulæ, the veil is lifted, and the bridegroom may take a peep at his beloved, whose

face he has not seen for some time. Before the last of the wedding repasts can be eaten the bride must give presents of clothes and food to her new relations. "Each recipient rises in turn, and the unfortunate bride has to make new prostrations to each relative, touching the table with her forehead in token of humility and obedience to her "husband's people." This formal profession of obedience to her new relatives is completed on the following morning by a visit to her mother-in-law, before whom she prostrates herself to the ground in an act of homage.

The weeping, to which we have so often referred, is not now found except in isolated and distant regions, and it is performed by professionals, who shed no tears but utter doleful lamentations to the tune of an ancient and rather monotonous melody. Artificial though it all is at the present time it is calculated to impress the uninitiated with a sense of extreme sadness. Not long ago, some of the professional weepers, all of whom are women, were imported into Helsingfors to give, to their fellow-countrymen, an exhibition of their skill and a reminder of the customs that accompanied the weddings of their ancestors.

If we now confine ourselves to common practices of the present day we shall find that they vary considerably in different parts of the country, but amongst the peasants the following is the usual order of proceedings. The legal age for marriage can be as low as eighteen in the case of a man and fifteen in the case of a woman, but to marry at this early age the bridegroom must give evidence that the parties are of legal age and also that he is in need of a wife. This latter condition is based on the division of labour upon the farm. The dairy, the cows and the women-servants are under the sole and absolute control

of the woman; the man has nothing to do with them. His work, also unfettered, is concerned with the men-servants, the horses, and the work of the fields. Hence, if a young man of eighteen wishes to take over a farm, a wife is his first and indispensable assistant, and to meet his case the law permits an unusually early marriage.

If a couple of poor peasants marry, say two farm-servants, the local landowner will often give them a piece of land for their own use. The rent of this is paid in labour, perhaps a week in the year, during the harvest season. The new couple first of all fell enough wood to build the bath-house, in which they live for twelve months. After the expiration of that period they build the *stuga* or dwelling-house.

Civil marriages are unknown; all weddings must be conducted by a minister of religion. In the time of the Bobrikoff tyranny the clergy proved the most yielding section of the community, and they gave such offence that the more patriotic citizens determined never to enter a church again. Those who could afford it went to Denmark or Sweden where civil marriages are possible. To-day the most independent of all merely insert an advertisement in the local papers to the effect that they have taken each other for man and wife. The law does not recognise such marriages, but public opinion is in favour of them and no stigma of shame results from these free unions. Husband, wife and children are all accepted by society just as if they had gone through the usual formalities before the priest. Experience has shown that such marriages are as sound and happy as the conventional and legal ones.

No one is allowed, theoretically, to marry till he can

read or write, and as no one was admitted to the Holy Communion until he could also read and write, the priests were able to prevent weddings between illiterate people. A great deal depended on the priest and his idea of what was a reasonable standard of literary attainment. Madame Malenberg tells me that her own father, who was a country priest, was so strict that there was not one illiterate person in the whole of his extensive parish. Some of the most frequent jokes on the subject allude to the ways in which this salutary rule was dodged by the dunces of the countryside.

The preliminary moves in the game are made by an official go-between, and there are cases on record where this gentleman would appear to have been the most important agent in the whole business. When Miss Bayley was travelling in Finland, her driver, who was rather a chatty person, told her how he got his wife. He said, "There was some talk of her in the village. My aunt's nephew spoke to me of her, but I never saw her till the day before we were engaged. When I heard of her I went to 'the man of speech,' who always arranges these things. I gave him five marks for her. She liked what she heard of me, and she gave him, as she was bound, a white shirt. Then I thought I would see her, so we arranged to meet at the church at Uukuniemi, and we went there, and it was all right."

The spokesman is usually chosen from amongst the intimate friends of the bridegroom, and fluency of speech is a necessary qualification. He is a useful creature, for he not only asks for the bride but he has to help at the wedding ceremonies and feast, and to provide, at his own expense, brandy and coffee for the guests. The

proposal having been accepted, rings are exchanged, the man adopting the badge of happy servitude as well as the woman, and the wedding is arranged to take place at a time when the man shall have collected enough furniture and cash, and the girl shall have woven sufficient linen and stuff to stock the little household. As a sign of sincerity on the part of the accepted lover, he gives something to the father, a cow or other gift, according to his means. He also pays in advance a certain sum to the girl to buy things for the house.

A month before the wedding the spokesman and the betrothed couple go to the pastor, dressed in their best clothes, and arrange with him to read the banns the next three Sundays in the bride's district. The publication of banns is universal.

The wedding takes place at the bride's house, and is fairly expensive for the bridegroom, as he is expected to give, not only such presents as are common with us, but also gifts to his father-in-law, mother-in-law, and other persons indirectly interested in the ceremony. The usual gift for the bridesmaids is a pair of stockings; shirts and other articles of clothing may be given to the other relatives.

When the parties are poor and those bidden to the festival comprise but a few near relatives the wedding is often celebrated at the house of the clergyman. Sunday is a favourite day, and in country parishes from three to five couples will appear every week to seek the services of their pastor in the tying of the wedding knot. Evening, rather than morning, is the favourite time of the day for the celebration of the concluding rites.

Where there is a little more spare cash to devote to the

celebration there is a feast lasting for two days; ten to twenty years ago it lasted for a week. The clergyman arrives on the first day at the bride's house; the second day's entertainment occurs at the home of the bridegroom and may have to be deferred for some little while if he lives at a considerable distance from the home of the chosen one. The guests come from miles around, and often bring a part of the feast with them—a can of milk, some corn-brandy, a dish of porridge, a loaf of white bread, and so on.

Before the bridal home there used to be placed, one on each side of the door, two spruce pine-trees from which all the bark and the lower branches had been stripped. According to some people the custom was to leave these branches in this position until the bride became a mother. The custom is no longer prevalent though it obtains in individual cases.

According to Paul Wainemann a wedding in the neighbourhood of Sortavala is an event that calls for the expenditure of an unusual amount of energy, as the ceremony cannot be completed under four days, and during practically the whole of that time the bride is compelled to appear in the millinery and decorations appropriate to the occasion. On her head she wears a bridal crown of enormous weight, the common property of the district.¹ Some of these symbols of the future queenship of the wife have been in the possession of the same village for centuries. When the wedding is over, the happy couple sit in state, the bride holding a sieve

¹ This must be taken as a rather exceptional instance. The four days are now reduced to two, and the heavy crowns are oftener seen in the museums than on the heads of the brides.

on her knees. Each guest advances in turn, salutes the lady, offers congratulations which possess the usual amount of sincerity and value, and then places some money in the sieve. The bridal collection is used for defraying the cost of the trousseau. By the side of the wife stands a groomsman who calls out in a loud voice the name of the donor and the amount of his contribution.

The whole concludes, as usual, with a feast, in which the Finns, who are very abstemious as a rule, engage in a gigantic eating bout. It being a sign of good breeding both to give and to receive enormous supplies of table delicacies, the dyspeptic subject is confronted with the dilemma of ruining either his health or his reputation for good manners. The cost of this wedding banquet is so great that the givers are occasionally doomed to eat only the plainest fare for the space of a twelvemonth, a period none too long for the reparation of the damages to purse and person.

"About thirty guests sat down to a table, and the fare provided would have been sufficient for a hundred. The pastor's wife herself handed each course to the guest of honour, who sat on the pastor's right. In the middle of the repast, six mighty currant puddings with vanilla sauce appeared, and then the company started afresh with four enormous geese, followed with other courses" (Wainemann).

Amongst the upper classes in the small provincial towns, the bride and bridegroom have the unusual unpleasantness of sitting on a balcony, or at a window, for the edification of the townspeople. On either side of them stand the two groomsman holding lighted candelabra. There is some compensation in this, inasmuch

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A CHILD'S FUNERAL (AFTER EDELFELT)

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as the wedding banquet is being celebrated at the same time by the guests, and the wedded couple are spared the mixture of vanilla sauce and geese that might otherwise impair their digestions, and consequently their tempers, at the outset. In the street the witty indulge in loud remarks about the charms of the bride and the deficiencies of the bridegroom.

The *Kalevala* gives us no information as to the disposal of the dead. It merely says that they were laid to bed under the ground.

At the present time the burials are conducted with great simplicity, especially amongst the poor. It was, and still is in some places, the custom to hire professional singers to sing the "corpse song" while the body is being washed and laid out. The relatives may join in this weird melancholy chant if they wish, but naturally the greater part of the singing is done by the paid chorus.

As in the case of wedding customs, so also funeral customs vary locally, and the following remarks must not be taken as of universal application.

The corpse is laid in an outhouse for three days. On the fourth it is placed in front of the door of the house, and the relatives, who have been gathered together in a room hung with white sheets, come forth to say their last good-bye. Each person approaches the body in turn, the relatives kissing it and the others only shaking it by the hand. Then the coffin is screwed down, placed on a sledge, strapped across a pony's back, or, in some other way transported to the cemetery. In thinly populated districts, where some time is required for the assembling of the friends, the coffin is often lowered into the grave a fortnight or a month before the service is read by the

clergyman. Fir-branches are scattered on the grave when it is closed.

The mourning garb is the same as the holiday attire, except that brilliant colours are absent. On the Sunday after the funeral, special thanks are offered to God for those He has been pleased to call to Himself, the departed ones being mentioned each by name.

There is something very beautiful about the way in which the Finns regard death. The women speak quite joyfully of those "whom it hath pleased God to take," and quite a common saying runs, "Never call a man rich till he be dead."

Certain special sweetmeats, tied up in crape, are distributed at funerals, and if the person being buried be of any importance the quantities given are enormous. At one time it was the custom to give the guests, as they left the house of mourning, a loaf of rich currant bread in the shape of a wreath. These were called "funeral loaves," and on important occasions there were too many of them for the baker's cart and they had to be brought home in farm-wagons.

CHAPTER VIII

HISTORY

THE compression of the history of any country into a few pages is never an easy task, but it is perhaps easier in the case of Finland than it would be in the case of many other countries, owing to the fact that we can group most of the outstanding features of that history into a few well-defined epochs. In the first place, we have the misty, distant and unrecorded days of the earliest era, a period that lasted till almost the middle of the twelfth century. This was followed successively, by the conquest of the country by the Swedes, a long period of Swedish government during a great part of which Finland was a battleground between Russia and Sweden; the conquest of the country by Russia; and, finally, a series of events that have occurred since this second conquest, and which will be remembered eternally to the discredit of the conqueror.

All that we know or conjecture about the earliest inhabitants of Finland is based upon philological research, the examination of sundry stone and iron weapons and implements, and the rich and varied traditions which have descended from generation to generation. Of written evidence there is none, neither in the form of documents, cuttings in the rocks or runic monuments, for the early heathen races knew nothing of the art of writing. But from the examination of the language and

the legends, certain conclusions have been deduced that may be accepted as being as near the truth as we are ever likely to get.

The first fact that emerges with any clearness out of the fogs of the prehistoric era is that long before the Finns came to Finland the southern portion of the country was already inhabited. On both sides of the Gulf of Bothnia, and on the banks of many of the rivers that mingle their waters with those of the tideless gulf, a rich harvest has been gleaned of antiquities similar to those found in most of the countries of western Europe. Many of these belong to the Later Stone Age, a few belong to the Bronze Age, and a large number belong to the successive Iron Ages. A fine collection of these memorials of vanished days will be found in the museum at Helsingfors. No fewer than 517 of the stone implements there exhibited were collected by a poor landless peasant, Solomon Vilskman. The race that made and used these articles was a Scandinavian one, and it is highly probable that part of the present Scandinavian population of Finland is descended from the Scandinavians who were there some thousand years before the Finns arrived.

The general opinion is that the Finns belonged to the Turanian tribes who passed through Persia, and that they were amongst the earliest invaders to cross the Ural Mountains. The race to which they belonged, the Finnish-Ugrian, was a very numerous one, and its descendants are to-day to be found scattered over a wide area reaching from the Ob and the Ural in the east to the banks of the Danube in the west and the south. "The Finns are first cousins to the Magyars and forty-second cousins to the Turks, the Mongols and the Manchus," but they

are no relations of the Lapps, with whom it is customary for the tourist to confound them. Successive hordes of Asiatic invaders came in from the east, and the earlier immigrants were gradually swept farther and farther west, till at last the Finns, who had originally settled north of the central Volga, reached the shores of the Gulfs of Bothnia and Finland. There were two tribes, differing in physical appearance and mental qualities, one, the light-hearted musical Karelians of eastern Finland; the other, the lighter-haired, square-set, somewhat boorish Tavasts of the west.

These tribes must have begun their emigrations after the Buddhist era, for they carried with them the emblems of that faith, and somewhere about the ninth century they would appear to have spread themselves over Finland. In the period that elapsed between the first immigrations from Asia and the final settlement in Finland they had come into contact with various other tribes of Slavonic or Aryan origin, and from them they had borrowed a number of words which had become incorporated in their own language. There are so many words whose linguistic roots belong to a prehistoric parent tongue of Aryan origin, that it may be taken as certain that the wanderers spent many years in close contact with Aryan tribes.

An interesting piece of evidence bearing on this question was discovered in the centre of Tavastland between fifty and sixty years ago. It consists of a necklace of thin silver coins of the Samanid race of Persian monarchs, one Swedish, and four Anglo-Saxon coins. The Persian coins of this date are found frequently in northern Europe, and a few have even been discovered as far west as Bangor

and the Isle of Skye. No European coins of the same age have been discovered in Persia, so that it would seem that the tribes brought their wealth with them in the form of gold and silver coins, and that they did not return to their own land either for trade or for other purposes. The separation was complete. "It was," says Topelius, "only on the coasts of the Gulfs of Bothnia and Finland that the branches of this numerous race, which had spread so far westward, at last found a refuge for human culture, sheltered from the wilderness and yet attainable by the seas. The fact that the Finns still exist, that they have preserved their national individuality, and succeeded in attaining European civilisation is in a great part due to the peculiar nature of their country, which is at once so bleak and cold but at the same time so sunny, so enclosed and yet so open, so sheltered and yet accessible to European influence."

The character of these early settlers, their aims and ideals, their habits and customs, are revealed to us in the legends that have been preserved in so rich a measure. These rovers from Asia were a warlike people, and yet they never fought for aggrandisement, only for self-defence; and their powers of resistance were so great that it took Sweden three wars and a hundred and fifty years to subdue their descendants in a land that was thinly peopled and torn with civil wars, and it took Russia, in her turn three hundred years to perform the same task.

After a time, as was only natural, the days of roving being over, they settled down to the tilling of the ground, though their main occupations were still hunting, fishing and tending flocks and herds. They understood the use of metals and the art of weaving. Woman was held in

respect and honour, and domestic life was developed. Prisoners of war were generally used as slaves, but kindly treatment was meted out to them. There was no king and hardly even tribal chiefs except in time of war. The unit was the family, and of this the father was the head. Custom was law; barter was trade. National life, as such, did not exist; religion was the worship of the sun and the moon, the practice of witchcraft and sorcery. And yet of all the nations of Finnish race, the only European branches that have achieved any measure of civilisation and historic importance on its own soil are the Magyars and the one that inhabits this north-west corner of the Russian Empire. With the exception of the Magyars, the others are mere remnants of nations that in past centuries were full of vitality and enterprise, lords and rulers of vast areas. "In some places," says Freeman, "the Finnish element has been totally displaced by Aryan settlers; in others it has made its way by conquest into lands already Aryan. In one land it has stayed at home and grown its own growth, under Aryan rule certainly, but under a rule which did not carry with it either displacement, bondage or assimilation. In the Magyar kingdom the Finn still speaks his Finnish tongue, bears rule over Aryan subjects. In the Bulgarian lands, he has, as far as speech goes, been assimilated by Aryan subjects and neighbours. But he still keeps something which distinguishes him from other speakers of the kindred Slavonic tongues. In the Baltic provinces of Russia he still lives on through conquest after conquest along with masters who have become sharers in his bondage. But on the north side of their own gulf a Finnish people still abide on their own soil, still keeping

their national speech and national life, a speech and life which we have also endured through two conquests, but conquests each of which has served to raise the conquered to the level, or above the level, of the conquerors."

The second period of Finnish history, the first for which documentary evidence is available, but one in which legend still plays a part, dates back to the twelfth century, when Eric IX, King of Sweden, partially conquered the land. It was by this conquest that Finland was brought within the pale of European religion and civilisation, for the efforts of the Swedish king were directed not merely towards civil and military conquest, but also towards spiritual regeneration. His expedition was the outcome of that curious mixture of spiritual and religious fervour which for so many years dominated the continent of Europe and which gave birth to the various crusades. This enterprise of Eric was in itself regarded as a species of crusade, and he bears the double title of King and Saint.

It took a period of one hundred and fifty years to render the Swedish occupation effective. During that time and for another four and a half centuries afterwards Finland was under Swedish rule. The new territory was governed in accordance with Swedish laws, and the faith of Sweden was that in which the new subjects were received and trained. The land received a great influx of Swedish colonists, a movement which tended to bind the two countries more firmly together, but the older race of Finns lived on by itself, holding a separate existence without displacement or slavery. The Finn still spoke his own language and lived his own life, though he shared with his fellow-subjects the privileges of Swedish law and shared with them, too, their loyalty to the Swedish king. He had

become a part of a new state, and yet lost nothing of his individuality in so doing. There can be no doubt that the conquest by Sweden was the best thing that could have happened to the Finns. Their numbers were so few, their natural defences were so feeble, and their distance from the currents of European civilisation so great, that their absorption by a more powerful neighbouring state was bound to ensue. Had that State been Russia, the development of any vigorous form of Finnish nationality would have been doomed. The Swedes, on the other hand, were, considering the time in which they lived, an advanced and cultured people, whose influence upon the subject race was sure to make for their uplifting, while their numbers were so small that there was little danger of their swamping the Finns altogether. With the influx of Swedish settlers along the coast came Christianity and the firmly established Scandinavian principles of self-government and personal and civil liberty. The Finn remained a Finn, but became a branch of the Scandinavian family.

The third period of Finnish history may be said to extend from about the end of the thirteenth century, when Sweden came into conflict with Russia upon her westward advancing frontier, down to the beginning of the nineteenth, when the Russian conquest of the country was completed. During all those years, Finland was, with brief intervals, the battle-ground of the two contending nations. As Sweden advanced in one direction, bearing with her the religion of the Roman Church, Russia moved forward in the opposite direction, bearing with her the religion of the Greek Church. The frontier between the two nations moved backwards and forwards

from time to time, according as one side or the other was victorious in battle.

To this day in eastern Finland a common salutation is, "What is heard?" reminding us of that long epoch in which the expected answer was either "Peace" or "War," and when it was oftener "War" than "Peace."

The desire of Russia for the possession of Finland was a perfectly natural one, for the country gave her a bulwark against her western foe and an outlet to the sea. "It is water I want, not land," said a Tsar. The story of the many struggles endured, the treaties made and torn up, the oaths solemnly vowed and recklessly broken, is an intricate and often a sordid one, but out of the mass of details and the welter of conflicting interests and motives certain facts and principles stand out clearly for our observation. And of these we may note in the first place, as constant through all times, that during the whole period of contention, the conservative, law-abiding, peace-loving Finn showed little discontent with his Swedish masters. His loyalty, when all the circumstances are carefully examined, is very remarkable, for there were always influences at work tending to produce a separation from Sweden, though not tending, at first, towards distinct union with Russia. Sweden was often employed in fighting elsewhere, and the Finns were left to themselves to repel the Russian invaders by their own efforts, and this fighting for their homesteads was certain to develop an intense feeling of patriotism and national pride. When Finland was made into a Grand Duchy and an appanage of a Swedish prince the movement towards a separate existence would, one might have expected, have become acute. But under no circumstances whatever

was there ever the slightest symptom of disloyalty on the part of the Finnish people.

The first important Russian invasion took place in 1473. The struggle lasted for many years and much life was lost on both sides. It was during this campaign that the castle at Nyslott was built by a Swedish knight, Eric Tott, to keep back the invaders. The original building was of wood, but within two years an erection of stone took its place, every particle of which was put in position under an armed escort. The Russians were finally defeated after a desperate attack on Viborg in 1497, but the happiness of Sweden at the success of her arms was soon dashed to the ground, for she fell into the hands of the tyrant, Christian II of Denmark, some three years later. He instituted a reign of terror which happily was of short duration, for within yet another three years Gustavus Vasa had arisen, like our own Alfred, had routed the Danes and reinstated Swedish rule. The romantic history of Gustavus Vasa has inspired with enthusiasm the poets and historians of many lands. When only twenty-four years of age he found himself a friendless outlaw. Moving amongst the peasants he rallied them to his side, and delivered Sweden from the Danish yoke. When the crown was offered him at Stockholm he affected reluctance to receive it. He was a strange mixture. He gave to his people laws and learning, and secured for them an era of unexampled prosperity and peace. Yet he clipped the coin of the realm and denied the fact. He repelled with a violent burst of anger the accusation that he was in sympathy with the teachings of Luther, yet he subsequently established that form of worship throughout his dominions. He plundered the Catholics and

reformed the Church, and then tyrannised over the Lutheran clergy. In Finland his name is particularly associated with the improvement of agriculture, the reclamation and colonisation of the desert provinces of Tavastland and Savolax, and the founding of the first Helsingfors on a site four miles away from the present capital.

Gustavus Vasa had four sons, amongst whom he divided his inheritance. The eldest of these was Eric XIV, who, after having been rejected as a husband by our own Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, and two German princesses, eventually wedded a beautiful peasant girl, Karin Månsdotter. It is almost impossible to visit Finland without hearing the story of Eric and his peasant bride. One day the king was strolling through the market-place at Stockholm when his attention was attracted by a singularly fair and graceful child, the daughter of a common soldier, who was selling nuts. He sent her to his palace to be educated, and when she was old enough he asked her to marry him. All kinds of objections were raised by his nobles and his relatives, and accusations of witchcraft were made against Karin. But the wild and passionate monarch took his way and married the little nut-seller. Then a brother prince, who felt deeply the disgrace that had been brought upon the royal order by this unseemly match, sent Eric a present of a handsome cloak in the back of which was sown a patch of rough home-spun cloth. Eric accepted the gift, had the patch of home-spun embroidered with gold and studded with jewels till it was the most brilliant and valuable part of the garment, and then returned it to the donor. Eric was subsequently deposed and imprisoned by his brother

John. In his gloomy dungeon his faithful wife repaid his chivalry by the devotion with which she spent her time in soothing him in the madness that clouded his later days. When he died she resigned the crown and went into exile. In Åbo Cathedral there is a stained glass window by Swertschoff depicting the queen in robes of white satin and wearing the royal crown. She is seen descending from the throne leaning on the arm of a Finnish page. She passed the thirty long years of her lonely exile in a castle on the shores of Kangasala. Karin died in 1612 and was buried in Åbo Cathedral, where her big black marble sarcophagus claims the attention of every visitor. Soon after her death the castle she had occupied was burnt down, but the memory of her connection with Kangasala is preserved by the old portrait of her that is hung in the organ gallery of the village church.

Eric, as we have seen, was deposed and imprisoned by his brother John. John was succeeded by his son Sigismund. The youngest and ablest son of Gustavus Vasa was Charles, who deposed his nephew Sigismund and ascended the throne in 1600. He was hard and cruel but an eminently capable ruler and well versed in the learning of his day. The common people loved him and called him "Charles the Good," but the record of some of his doings scarcely seems to support such a title. The Finns, with their customary loyalty, had refused to support Charles in his attempts to obtain the crown. Their governor during the troublous period was Klas Fleming, and a well-known picture by Edelfelt represents Duke Carl of Sweden standing by the bier of Fleming, who, as commander of Åbo Castle, had refused to surrender to the duke. Death alone had brought about the

capitulation of the fortress and the duke, enraged that death should have robbed him of his prey, is wreaking his wrath upon the corpse of his enemy by pulling the dead man's beard. Turning to the soldier's wife he remarked, "If your husband were living his head would not be as safe as it is now." To which the undaunted countess, with flashing eyes and queenly bearing, replied, "If he were living, your Highness would not be here." For their loyalty to their sovereign the Finlanders suffered severely, and twenty-nine of their nobles were barbarously executed at Åbo in the presence of Charles. He returned to Sweden, imprisoned many of the heads of the great families who opposed the Lutheran religion and put several others to death.

For about a century after the accession of Charles IX the country enjoyed peace. The most memorable events occurred in the reign of Queen Christine, when the first Finnish university was established at Åbo and the ancient Helsingfors was abandoned in favour of a new city on the site of the present capital.

The definite struggle for the mastery of the Baltic began about the middle of the seventeenth century. Peter the Great of Russia and Charles XII of Sweden were the antagonists. The struggle lasted for twenty-one years. Charles lost five Finnish regiments, the flower of his army; the country was devastated by fire, sword and famine, and when peace was made there were not more than a quarter of a million of inhabitants left. Thousands had fallen victims to one or the other of the "dogs of war," and in addition, thousands of Finns of all ages and sexes were carried off to Russia to be sold as slaves. Some of them were even sold to Persian taskmasters, and

as late as 1726 there were over a thousand Finns living in bondage at Ispahan. Peace was made in 1721. By the Treaty of Nystad, Peter the Great won for Russia, not only Ingria and Livonia, but also a great part of Karelen, including Viborg. Within less than a quarter of a century (1743) there had been another war, another peace—the Peace of Åbo—and a further extension of the Russian boundary as far as the Kymmene river. And so matters went on until 1808, when the final and decisive struggle took place by which Finland was wrested for ever from Sweden.

Here begins the fourth period of Finnish history. While Sweden was engaged in the wars with Napoleon, Russia, on the pretext that the ports of Finland had not been closed against possible invaders, crossed the frontier without any declaration of war. The Finns were once more left to themselves and the contest was practically settled in favour of Russia, when the fortress of Sveaborg, which had been built to protect Helsingfors, was surrendered without a shot being fired. For this act Sweden never forgave the admiral in command. Why he offered no resistance has never been explained, but one thing is certain, and that is, that he did not personally profit by his act of treachery, for he died a comparatively poor man on his own estate in Finland some years later. The army of Finland, deserted and disorganised, fled northwards in despair. For some months General Adlercreutz maintained an heroic struggle against overwhelming odds. Tammerfors and Kuopio were stubbornly defended by gallant little garrisons of Finnish soldiers, who had been deserted by the panic-stricken Swedes on whose behalf they were waging this hopeless fight. The war was full

of heroic episodes, many of which have been sung by Runeberg in his patriotic cycle, "Ensign Stål's Songs." At the battle of Oravais, for instance, 8500 Russians were held in check for fourteen hours by a Finnish band not one-third their number, and the contest was only settled by the arrival of a large reinforcement for the Russian army. It was in this engagement that the gallant young Von Schwerin, a boy of sixteen, distinguished himself by his bravery and presence of mind. He died of the wounds received on that and the following day, but Edelfelt and Runeberg between them have preserved in picture and in song the memory of his noble exploits. No invasion was ever resisted with such tenacity and yet with such hopelessness, for the mere handful of undrilled peasantry was foredoomed to slaughter by the legions of the Tsar.

While the war was still in progress the Tsar Alexander I. summoned representatives of the people to meet him at St. Petersburg to discuss the affairs of the Grand Duchy. The nation was weary of fighting, pestilence and famine, but the delegates were somewhat wary in their proceedings and told Alexander that they could not be legally considered the representatives of their fellow-countrymen, and advised him to call a meeting of the Diet, at which everything could be adequately discussed. He accepted the proposal and the Diet met at Borgå in March 1809. The position was a peculiar one. War between Russia and Sweden was still in progress and Finland was still an integral part of the Swedish dominions. Hence the Finnish Diet could only legally be summoned by the Swedish king. But in such times as these old laws and precedents are apt to come to grief,

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BORG

and so the Diet was summoned by a king who had no legal right to do anything of the kind. The cession to Russia of all her rights in Finland was made by Sweden about six months later at the Peace of Fredrikshamn.

The Diet of Borgå was opened in the cathedral. When all the representatives and officials were assembled, the Tsar entered and took his seat on a throne specially prepared for the occasion and adorned with the golden lion of Finland. The Governor-General in the presence and on behalf of the Tsar read the following Act of Assurance—

“ Providence having placed Us in possession of the Grand Duchy of Finland, we have desired, by the present act, to confirm and ratify the Religion and fundamental Laws of the Land, as well as the privileges and rights to which each class of the said Grand Duchy in particular, and all the inhabitants in general, be their position high or low, have hitherto enjoyed according to the Constitution. We promise to maintain all these benefits and laws firm and unshaken in their full force.”

Oaths having been sworn, the Tsar spoke. As his audience could not understand Russian, and as the Grand Duke could not speak either Swedish or Finnish he addressed his listeners in French. “ This brave and loyal people will be grateful to that Providence which has brought about the present state of affairs. *Placed from this time forward in the rank of nations*, governed by its own laws, it will only call to mind its former rulers, in order to cultivate friendly relations when these shall have been re-established by peace. And I shall have reaped the

best result for my solicitude, when I see this nation externally tranquil, internally free, devoting itself to agriculture and industry under the protection of its laws and of its good customs and manners, and thus, by the very fact of its prosperity, doing justice to my intentions, and blessing its lot."

This act of Alexander I is a curious one in political history and the character of it is worth emphasising. He ruled his other dominions with unrestrained power, but he gave to his new possession an amount of freedom not usually accorded by any nation to a conquered state. It is not really correct to apply the term "annexation" to the results of the war and of the Borgå Diet. It is true that Russia and Finland were to have a common sovereign, but in everything else the two countries were to be separate. Alexander had promised that Finland should maintain absolutely the same freedom and independence she had had under Sweden. The administrative and legislative powers were to remain with the people, and there was to be no interference with either language or religion. Only in the management of foreign affairs and as commander-in-chief of the army was the Russian Tsar to have the sole voice.¹ Alexander boasted that he had created a nation, and there is truth in the vaunting phrase, for the people of Finland had ceased to be a part of the Swedish nation, and they had become, not a part of the Russian nation, but a new people with a distinct national existence of their own.

There can be no doubt that for many years Finland gained as much by her second conquest as by her first. She was freed from all fear of invasion, and she had retained the right to maintain and develop, peacefully

and without let or hindrance, her constitution and her institutions. And two years after the annexation she even gained in territory, for Alexander cut off from his Empire and added to his Grand Duchy those Finnish districts that had been ceded to him by treaty sixty years before. "The boundary of his constitutional Grand Duchy was brought very near the capital of his despotic Empire." Under these circumstances, Viborg, which had been regarded as the capital of eastern Finland, declined in importance. A like fate befell the ancient capital of Åbo, while the new capital of Helsingfors waxed daily in wealth and power. Curiously, Alexander never summoned another Diet and his brother Nicholas I bettered his example by never summoning one at all. Although unable to deprive the country of its constitutional liberty, the Iron Tsar placed many obstacles in the way of its intellectual and commercial development. He closed many of the schools and exercised a severe censorship over press and platform. It was left to Alexander II to give back to Finland her Diet and to give her also official recognition of her language.

Curiously enough, though he did nothing for Finland in the way of extending her liberties, no sovereign has ever won so much personal affection as the Tsar Alexander III. He visited Finland every summer, cruised about the archipelago, travelled inland, and had a yacht on the Saima Lake. No sooner was his vessel anchored in the gulf, than small boats of every description could be seen gliding over the water, filled with peasants bearing offerings of fruit and flowers.

Alexander III's love of Finland and the Finns created a great deal of jealousy and irritation in Russia. He was

particularly fond of hearing the Finnish students sing their national songs, and on many occasions he commanded parties of them to come to St. Petersburg to entertain him and his friends. The students were met at the station by well-equipped landaus, taken to one of the palaces, and treated as highly favoured guests of the monarch. Their concert always concluded, at the Tsar's express wish, with the Finnish National Anthem, when he rose and insisted on all the Court standing too. The feelings of the Russian bureaucrats on these occasions must have been of a very disagreeable and venomous character.

The loyalty and progress of Finland under her Russian overlords were so conspicuous that it passes the wit of man to understand why Russia could not have let matters remain as they were. There was, however, something so foreign to the Russian spirit in the freedom of the Grand Duchy, that they first disliked it, then grew suspicious, and finally engaged in a work of suppression, the end of which is not yet. So irritable and childish had the governing powers become, that when, in 1894, a statue to Alexander II was unveiled at Helsingfors, the Governor-General prohibited the singing of an ode written for that occasion, because he took the praise of the "Father of Finnish liberties" to imply a condemnation of his less enlightened successor. The ode, as translated in Mrs. Bayley's *Vignettes of Finland*, runs as follows—

" Hail noble Prince ! From town and land
Our greetings come, from isle and strand,
From forest, hill, and dale.
Wherever Finland's folks may rest,
Their debt for all they value best,
In love to thee they pay.

It beams, as erst on that bright morn
'Twas woke by thee, with hope new-born,
And all its strength shall last as long
As Finland's folk are true.

" 'Twas not the glamour of thy throne
Which woke our love for thee,
Nor glory of Imperial name
That Finland loved to see.
Nay would'st thou know wherefore this love
Within our hearts was lit,
Read but the page thy hand, O Prince,
Hath on our history writ.

" Ay, even until far-off time
Shall Finland write thy name
(However rich her future be),
First on her roll of fame;
And it shall shine, a holy name,
Engraved on Finland's heart,
And it shall soar from day to day,
Of Finland's self a part.

" And now, when in these later times,
Blooming, thy Finland smiles,
Hedged by her father's laws,
With harvests gathered from thy seed,
Of princely vows which thou indeed,
Did'st sow for coming days,
Anew we honour thy loved name,
Bright herald of the dawn that came,
Whose magic word, for hope deferred,
Such glad assurance gave."

Alexander II was deeply beloved and respected, and his tragic death in 1881 was the cause of much sincere regret on the part of the devoted and loyal Finns. When Nicholas II ascended the throne in 1894 he solemnly vowed to govern the country in accordance with its Constitution, but in 1898 a Bill was submitted to the Diet, not for its consent, but simply for its

advice as to how the provisions of the Bill might best be carried out. This was an innovation, but not so great a one as that proposed by the Bill itself, the object of which was to force Finland to increase her military establishment and to take service in Russian garrisons under Russian officers. The Diet took the view that the objects of this Bill and the method of presenting it were both alien to their Constitution, and it was unanimously rejected. In 1899 came the punishment, for in that year an Imperial Manifesto was promulgated which stated that "It is necessary for the welfare of Finland that she be united by closer bonds to the Empire of Russia. The Diet will be abolished, having ceased to be essential to the government of the country. His Majesty Nicholas II will in future legislate for Finland without the latter's advice or assistance, and every new law must henceforth be passed for the Grand Duchy by the Imperial Council at St. Petersburg, and must be sanctioned, before its enforcement, by the Emperor. On the other hand, a certain number of Finnish senators (appointed by the Russian President) will be entitled to a vote in the proceedings."

The manner in which the people received this terrible announcement as to the loss of their dearly cherished rights was dramatic and characteristic. On the Sunday following the issue of the manifesto the whole nation went into mourning. Shops and theatres were closed, the streets were deserted, all places of amusement were forsaken. The people dressed in black and draped the public buildings with crape. It was as though a plague had swept across the land plunging every one into an intense pathetic sorrow. At dusk thousands of people

crowded round the statue of the beloved Alexander, and, as the twilight deepened, there rose from a multitude of veiled women and children the patriotic strains of the National Anthem, telling of a devoted love for the Fatherland. Flowers were heaped at the base of the statue, and then the crowd dispersed silently and mournfully, without rioting or any other form of disturbance. In a few days, a petition, signed by half a million of adult male citizens, some of whom lived miles beyond the Arctic Circle, was ready for presentation to the Tsar. Five hundred Finns, one from each parish, went to St. Petersburg to present the document and were refused an audience.

To quell this loyal, loving people General Bobrikoff, Chief of Staff of the Guards in St. Petersburg, was made Governor-General of Finland, and a reign of terror set in. A rigid censorship of the press was exercised, men were imprisoned or deported without accusation and without trial, homes were searched by inhuman gendarmes, delicate women and children were brutally ill-treated. Many of those who were able, both rich and poor, fled from their native land as though flying from death itself. The annual average emigration to lands outside Europe leaped from about three thousand to over fifteen thousand. Acts of oppression crowded fast upon one another. It was in 1904 that relief came. The Russian Governor-General Bobrikoff, the senseless miscreant who was responsible for these outrages on the lives and liberties of the people, was shot. The man who did the deed was Eugene Schauman, a young member of the Finnish nobility. In order that no one should suffer for his act except himself, he shut himself off from family

and friends for several months, told no one of his plans and admitted no one into his secrets. He met Bobrikoff at the Senate House, shot him as he descended the steps, turned his revolver upon himself and fell dead at the feet of the tyrant. Schauman was buried on the sandy ridge that lies above the cathedral at Borgå, and where the winds of his native land blow unhindered over his grave, carrying to his fellow-countrymen the message of his sacrifice. Flowers are laid daily on his grave, and throughout the land pictures and busts of the young hero are to be found bearing the simple inscription : " He gave his life for his country."

The subsequent events were of enthralling interest. About a year after the death of Bobrikoff a railway strike broke out in Russia. It began on October 29th, 1905, developed on the 30th, and was complete by the 31st, so rapid was its movement. On the latter date all Finland struck. It is one of the most amazing events of modern times. No one organised the revolt ; there were no leaders. Suddenly the whole social and political life of the community came to a standstill.

At eleven o'clock in the morning, the people of Helsingfors, moved as by one common impulse, in a manner which remains to this day unexplained, went in thousands to the Senate House and ordered the doors to be closed. The hated Russianised senators, with a celerity that only characterises their actions when their own selfishness or greed prompts them, fled to the residence of the Governor-General, Prince Oblonsky. Outside that residence the population of the capital were massed together, demanding, with one voice, the immediate resignation of the senators. They were only dispersed by the appearance

of one of the frightened legislators, who handed a letter to the crowd, promising that the demands of the infuriated populace should be forthwith granted.

The next day, November 1st, a force of Russian soldiers and a number of heavy guns were despatched against Helsingfors. The town was in a tumult; all life was suspended. There was neither gas, electricity nor trams; schools and university were closed, and the children, Russian and Finnish, paraded the streets in long processions, singing the *Marseillaise*. A deputation of two men was sent to meet the Russian forces and find out their intention. They met the soldiers in Majstad and were told by the men in the ranks, "If our officers command us to shoot, we'll shoot *them*. You can go home in peace." When the regiments arrived in Helsingfors, the people, delighted to find that the revolutionary spirit had infected those who had been sent against them, crowded round the soldiers, giving them presents of cigarettes and money, shaking hands with them, and making them as welcome as though they had brought complete deliverance from all the political ills by which the people had been oppressed.

On November 2nd a deputation was sent to St. Petersburg to make known to the Tsar what the nation wanted. On the 3rd, the national excitement was at its highest; the enthusiasm shown was so great that it is no exaggeration to say that there was hardly a single person throughout the whole country who was not ready and willing, if the need arose, to lay down his life in the cause of freedom. Meetings were held all over the land; an almost hysterical courage possessed the people. On the 4th the answer of the Tsar arrived. Everything that the Finns had asked

for had been granted. All the old laws were restored; oppressive regulations and edicts were withdrawn; the four Estates of the Diet were replaced by a single Chamber; adult suffrage was granted, including women. On the 5th the message was carried from one end of Finland to the other. The tension was relieved; the grim determination of a whole nation to die was changed to jubilation. On the 6th the strike ended; social life was resumed, and a blaze of illuminations turned the northern night into a panorama of dazzling brilliance, and not a house remained in gloom.

So, in six days, a whole nation had struck, a senate had been dismissed, a reformed Constitution had been accomplished, and political freedom had been achieved. Finland stood as one man demanding freedom and got it. Not a drop of blood was shed, not a pane broken, and no uproar created. It is one of the most astounding events of modern times.

CHAPTER IX

THE FINNISH PEOPLE ¹

THE result of the history of Finland since 1157 is the Finnish people. It has grown and continues to grow out of three national elements, originally different and hostile to each other, two of which are akin to one another, while the third is foreign. A red line of providential education runs through the whole of this phase of development. Two wild-grown Asiatic shoots of a many-branched decaying stem were not able to develop themselves without a prop. They were given in charge to a foreign supremacy, strong enough to sustain and raise them, but not superior enough to tread them down and absorb them. They grew up in a severe school, which educated them in liberty and European culture. When this school had given them what it was able to give, the amalgamated and ripened people was confided to the care of a great power, to be educated for successful progress and fresh trials. The greatest political changes of Finland have been wonderfully well adapted to the circumstances of the time. In constant strife, this frontier-guard of Europe was sure to be hardened, but its past is a sufficient guarantee for its future. A people that has survived what the Finns have gone through, cannot die so long as it retains its individuality.

¹ By Z. Topelius. (Reprinted by permission from *Finland in the Nineteenth Century*.)

The legends of giants, so generally spread in all Finland, preserve the traces of an earlier population of a foreign race which has now entirely disappeared. At what time the present Finns settled in the country cannot be stated with certainty, because this settlement most probably took place during the course of several centuries at the beginning of our era. The earliest settlers were the Lapps, then came the Tavasts, then the Karelians, and lastly, the Swedes, there being, however, many reasons to believe in a very early Swedish colonisation on the western coast and in the islands of Åland. At the time of the first Swedish crusade, in 1157, large territories in the interior were, indeed, an uninhabited wilderness. Four races were then in constant war with each other, fighting for hunting-grounds, fishing-waters, pastures and fire-clearances. A neighbour was considered a rival, different families and tribes made ravaging inroads into each other's dominions, and the inhabitants of the coast sailed out on warlike expeditions.

What we now call the Finnish people did not then exist. It is a product, not of languages and descent, but of historical development. Community of faith, of government, of laws and of society, in connection with the first political boundary of 1323, gave harmony and solidarity to these contending racial elements. Common friends and foes, common prosperity and adversity necessitated mutual assistance. The Lapps remained indifferent the longest, but the three other races began to amalgamate, though, indeed, only so gradually that still in the sixteenth century the Tavasts and the Karelians made inroads into each other's dominion. And even in our days, difference of language, character and customs has

given rise to useless disputes about the existence of one or two races in Finland.

It is a remarkable fact that the Finnish and Swedish populations of Finland, though running like two different streams beside each other without blending, never rose against each other, but, on the contrary, always stood side by side in the same rank, whenever sword was drawn at home or abroad. There was rivalry between them, but no oppression, for equality has been the leading feature of our legislation. A social, not a political inferiority has separated the Finnish-speaking majority of the people from the Swedish-speaking minority, and, to bring into accord this traditional incongruence has, since the third decade of the nineteenth century, been the social problem of our day in Finland.

Having conquered Finland in three crusades, in 1157, 1249 and 1293, Sweden, in 1362, lifted this country to a level with her old provinces, the liberty of the people being there guaranteed by ancient law. Thralldom was abolished throughout the empire in 1335, and a later endeavour of the nobility to introduce serfage failed entirely. Irregularities during times of great difficulty could not be avoided, but for more than five hundred years every Finnish citizen has been a freeborn man.

The laws and social order of Sweden were introduced without resistance into a country where law and society did not exist before. The people grew into these new forms, applied them according to their character, and became familiar with them as their own. The solitary situation of the country, which was shut out from the rest of the world for more than half of the year, was the cause of an autonomy which became apparent when the

powerful Bishop of Abo, during the union-feuds, became the actual ruler of the country. After that time Finland was regarded, together with Sweden, as the second chief part of the kingdom. But so little disposed for political independence was the Finnish character, that the people, again and again (in 1520, 1562, 1742, and 1788), unanimously and indignantly declined the temptation of disloyalty to its legal Government. It required a forcible historical necessity to bring about a gradual weakening and ultimate breaking of the tie with Sweden.

The conquest of Karelen in 1293 had brought Swedish arms to the gates of Russia. Finland, and in later years, the Baltic, became a constant source of contention between the two countries. The consequence of this was the bloody wars, which, with only short periods of truce, devastated Finland for five hundred years. The people shared with Sweden victory and defeat, and generation after generation built their cottages in ashes and sowed their fields in blood. Every third man fit for service was enrolled for the army, when danger did not call every man away. At last, when from 1714 to 1722 the greater part of the country was ravaged down to the very ground, impoverished, depopulated, and abandoned into the hands of the enemy, the hope, though not the loyalty, of the Finn began to falter. From that time the people gradually became convinced that such a position was untenable. Peace healed the wounds and peopled the wildernesses; then came war, then peace, then war again, and lastly, peace again; but so strong was the sense of duty, so unflinching the loyalty, that at the decisive change of things in 1808, most people then living in Finland thought that all was over. But they were mistaken.

Only now was it possible to build up a future, for which so many centuries had been working in vain, as long as Finland was the bloody shield of Sweden.

Wonderful is the patient, unconquerable belief in the future, by which cultivation, during war and poverty, one hand at the plough, the other on the sword-hilt, has constantly gained land in the wilderness. The political consciousness of the people had for a long time been slumbering during the hard fight for existence, but during the Thirty Years' War it woke up, and a hundred years later found expression at the Diets of the so-called Era of Liberty. When in 1809 Finland became a part of the Russian Empire and Alexander I magnanimously proclaimed that its people had taken their place among the nations, the Finns had, by their constitutional mode of government, been prepared for national duties. Their historical and geographical position between two powers, one of which wielded the sceptre of tradition, the other that of the existing time, compelled them to direct their principal energies to the development of their culture and of their national well-being. But this work of development was so far from involving political separatism—which, by the way, is opposed to the whole history of the country—that the people, no less than their home government, have always sought the guarantee for the future of Finland in the faithful discharge of their duties towards the monarch, who watches over the national interests, and towards the powerful empire with which they are united. The conflict of opinions, which always follows the penetration of a new tradition into the crevices of the old, has not related to politics. No conspiracy, no revolt, not even a tendency to revolution, has en-

dangered the political position of this country, which was established in 1809.

Nature, fate and tradition have stamped a common mark on the Finnish type of character, which, indeed, varies considerably in the country, but is easily recognised by the foreigner. The general traits of character are : hardened, patient, passive strength ; resignation ; perseverance allied to a certain obstinacy ; a slow, contemplative way of thinking ; an unwillingness to become angry, but a tendency, when anger has been aroused, to indulge in unmeasured wrath ; coolness in deadly peril, but caution afterwards ; taciturn reticence, alternating with a great flow of words ; an inclination for waiting, deferring, living for the day, interrupted sometimes by unseasonable haste ; adherence to the old and well known, and aversion to everything new ; attention to duty, a law-abiding habit of mind ; love of liberty ; hospitality ; honesty ; a predilection for religious meditation, revealing itself in true piety, which, however, is apt to have too much respect for the mere letter.

The Finn is recognised by his close, distant, reserved attitude. It takes him some time to thaw and become intimate, but his friendship, when won, is to be depended upon. He is often too late, often stands in your way without noticing it ; does not greet a meeting friend till he has passed him, keeps quiet when he had better speak, and sometimes speaks when he ought to keep quiet. He is one of the first soldiers in the world, but one of the last arithmeticians ; sees gold at his feet, but cannot make up his mind to pick it up ; remains poor when others become rich. Admiral von Stedinck said of him, " The Finn

wants a petard in his back to make him move." In outward appearance, the Finn is generally of a middle height and of a strong build, and his intellectual endowments want waking up. The awkward peasant-boy is not to be recognised when he has gone to school for a year or two, nor the cow-boy who was unable to count one bar on his birch-bark horn, but who to-day blows on a cornet in E flat in Tschaikowsky's "1812 Overture." Vocation and inclination for work depend, in the Finn, on impulse. Per Brahe, the first Swedish Governor-General of Finland, said of him, "It is to be noticed in this people who at home idle away their time on their stove, that abroad one of them works more than three other men." Lastly, we must not forget, among their general traits of character, their love of tales, of songs, proverbs, riddles, exercises of thought, and a disposition for satire which mercilessly ridicules their own follies and those of others.

The Tavast forms the kernel of the Finnish type of character. He inhabits the provinces of Tavastland, Satakunta, northern Nyland and southern Österbotten, except the coast-line and Finland proper, where colonies of Esthonians, his near relations, have mixed their blood and mutilated language with his. He is large-limbed, sometimes big, muscular, broad-shouldered, with a broad face, bent-in nose, grey eyes, and brown or flaxen hair. Work and privation often give him a look of premature age. He is the most hardened, the most industrious, the most frugal and the most contented of his countrymen, but also the most conservative, the most behindhand and stubborn. Clothed in his *mekko*, a smock-frock of coarse linen, he works, in summer, in the fields from sunrise till

late at night, and then contents himself with his *talkkuna*, a kind of porridge made of oatmeal, barley, rye and peas, which he carries in a knapsack, made of birch-bark, on his back. Such has he remained for centuries, almost unaltered in the interior and northern parts of his territory, but in the outskirts he has improved and come up with his contemporaries. The service at the estates of the Finnish nobility has bent but not broken his stiff and honest mind. The Tavast speaks the harder western Finnish tongue and has borrowed words from the Swedish. He lacks the poetical endowment of the Karelian, and consequently, the old myth has died out with him, but an unexpected number of modern national songs has been found even in his dominion.

The Karelian inhabits the provinces of Karelen, Savolaks, and northern Österbotten. Compared with the Tavast, he is more slender and brisk, more lively and sensitive, less steady, a born poet, a born trader, with brown hair, grey or brown eyes, slender limbs, and the whole of his appearance more open and affable. The Karelian is a clever child, whose education has been neglected. It is he who has treasured up the old Finnish myth until our days, and he constantly adds fresh lyrics to it. He uses family names; his language is the soft eastern Finnish tongue, so rich in diphthongs, with which, on the coast of the Ladoga, he mixes words derived from the Russian. At Viborg four languages are spoken, Finnish, Swedish, Russian and German. A descendant and kinsman of the famous Byarms of the Middle Ages, the Karelian has inherited from them his inclination for travelling and trade. As he used to roam about in the days of old on warlike and trading expeditions, so may

we now see him going in his cart on constant trips to St. Petersburg, or sailing in his " billy " on the Ladoga. Dangerous rivals have presented themselves in the shape of railways and steamboats, but the Karelian always finds fresh expedients; at St. Petersburg everything pays, even paving-stones and ants' eggs. His savings are doubtful, he takes life easily, lives comfortably when he can, and shares with others. " If there's no bread, one can eat white bread." In southern Karelen new bread is made every day, while poor northern Karelen resorts to the bark of the pine-tree. A great part of Karelen, sharing the fate of border-lands, has stayed much behind the rest of the country in civilisation. Since the middle of this century, however, agriculture, industrial arts and national education have been making progress, which is retarded by numerous house-beggars, who in some places amount to 37 per cent. of the population.

Through his religion, his laws and government the Russian Karelian east of the boundary has become a stranger in Finland, but retains the type of race in his language, customs and views of life. Karelian pedlars from the Government of Archangel stroll about in Finland and fraternise with the population. The Finnish Karelians are a heterogeneous mixture of different colonies which have been tossed about by wars and removals. In Savolaks he has formed a type of his own, the Savolaksian, who in intelligence and wealth has taken precedence of his neighbours. A rival of the Savolaksian is the inhabitant of northern Österbotten, whose language has become harder and whose culture has assumed a western Finnish form. Fifty years ago the South-Karelian still distinguished himself by gaily coloured national costumes.

■

From the shape of a married woman's embroidered chemise, the breast-pin and head-gear, one could judge of her native place, but now uncomely modern fashions have gained ground, and only the picturesque, long, white head-cloth worn by the women of Jääskis and hanging down their necks, is more generally known. The Sunday dress of the man is a blue and white gown with a belt. In winter he wears a high poleskin cap, in summer, a low hat with buckles.

The Karelian represents the bright, the Tavast the dark side of the Finnish national type. The geographical position of both, one in the east, the other in the west of the country, has been of decisive influence. The Swedish power, forcing its way from the west with its superior civilisation, came across the stubborn Tavast like a wall which was slowly cut through and never completely pulled down. If placed in the west, the easily susceptible Karelian would have run the risk of being denationalised, while in the east he has not had to fear a superior force of culture and has, besides, retained a broad belt of tribesmen between him and the Slavonians. Through this state of things the progress of Finland has been deterred, but her nationality saved.

The Swedish population of the country inhabits the whole of Åland with the surrounding islands, southern Nyland and the coast of southern Österbotten. In the coast towns the Swedish-speaking people are numerous, in some of them, preponderant. The Swedish tongue, having for more than two centuries been the language of the educated and the higher classes, many Finnish-speaking people have exchanged theirs for it, while others speak both languages. The provincial Swedish

is spoken in many ancient dialects, which retain traces of the old Norse tongue. The type of the race, fair hair, blue eyes, slender, tall build, varies, indeed, but the more lively, fiery, unreserved, unsteady Swedish national character is easily recognisable. The self-respect of the people is very sensitive. A free landowner since time out of mind, the Swedish "Österbottning" is a born democrat and jealous of his liberty. He has a remarkable aptitude for wood-work, so that we often find him at work as a carpenter far from his home, leaving the farming to his hardy women. The inhabitant of Nyland, a less skilful carver, but a better farmer, has become more submissive through serving on the manors, but has lost his elasticity. His life on board his "billy" loaded with wood is a mixture of hard toil and idle rest, while waiting for fair wind. The inhabitant of Åland is a sailor and ship-chandler, and, in consequence of his constant intercourse with Sweden, he is more at home in this country. A fisherman, like all the inhabitants of the coast, he sails farther out to sea than any of these. Besides, the Swedish population is more inclined for practical gain than for sentiment and reflection, though in their territory not a few legends and songs have been collected, often of a coarse naïveté without parallel amongst the Finnish population. In the Swedish popular song the music is the principal thing; the words are of little importance. In the Finnish it is quite the reverse. The Scandinavian myth exists only in names of places, in superstitions and old sayings, such as "Thor is walking about," etc.

Exceptional traces of the Swedish national costumes are to be found in the summer dress of the women and their tight-fitting little caps. In Österbotten the clergy

preached against all gay colours, and in many places succeeded in getting them displaced by grey or black colours, but not in abolishing the knife-belt with brass ornaments, the steel of which stains the country feasts and fairs with blood. On the slightest provocation, sometimes for no reason at all, when the men have been drinking too freely, the knife is drawn from its sheath. Then the women interfere, and to them we owe the rescue of many a life. In places where the Swedish and Finnish populations are neighbours without amalgamating, they generally borrow each other's good qualities, but in the vicinity of towns and in border-places with a mixed population, where the national type is disappearing, the dark sides of both often become visible.

The Lapp, whose territory has been divided among four nations, approaches in language, though not in character and custom, nearest the Finn. He calls himself *samelads*, and considers it an honour to be related to the Finn, who does not, however, acknowledge the relationship. The Lapp is not a half-brother, hardly even a cousin of the Finn. He is of a short, slender build, nimble, dark-haired, black-eyed, now indifferently passive, now impetuous, lively and inquisitive as a child, soft-hearted, naïf, easily cheated and easily frightened, a child of nature, who both in appearance and character lacks the leading features and depth of the Finnish type. The mountain Laplander, whose whole existence depends on his herds of reindeer and who removes with them from grazed lands to fresh pastures of reindeer-moss, remains, like his ancestors, an independent nomad, and has best preserved his original type. The fish-catching Lapp, who in summer removes to the sea-coast or to Lake

Enare, inhabits stationary dwellings in winter, and has degenerated through his dependence on others. Quite a collection has been made of Laplandish legends and songs, which manifest great love of this pathless, northern home.

The harmonious connection with Russia in later times has introduced into the towns, and into the surroundings of Viborg, a Russian colonisation, mostly of merchants, artisans and gardeners. Industrious and economical, they soon make a fortune, stand on friendly terms with the population, and generally assimilate with it in the second generation. The Russian military, stationed in the country, is exchanged periodically for fresh regiments. There are scattered settlers of *German, Danish, Norwegian, English, Scottish, and French* origin, whose forefathers long ago became naturalised Finns. *Gypsies* rove about the interior of the country. *Jews* are forbidden by old laws to immigrate, but discharged Russian soldiers of Jewish extraction having been allowed to remain in the country with their families, a small Jewish population has grown up at Helsingfors and in some other towns on the south coast.

A few facts and stories gathered from other sources may here be added in amplification or illustration of the above remarks.

It is necessary for every one who wishes for advancement in the service of the country to be familiar with two commonly-spoken languages, Finnish and Swedish. For the purpose of business, German is also needed, and the well-educated person is expected to know something of English and French. Hence the Finns are excellent

linguists and those of them who attend the holiday courses of our own universities are soon noted for the speed and accuracy with which they acquire our own tongue. I have known a Finnish girl of seventeen arrive here without being able to speak a word of the language, and yet able to criticise the speech of our fellow-countrymen within three months.

It is related of the Finnish delegate to the Geographical Congress held in London in 1897, that when the selection of delegates was being made he was asked if he understood English. "No," he replied, "but if you will appoint me delegate, I will know it," and in three weeks from that time he spoke English as an accomplished English scholar.¹

Perhaps the three characteristics most speedily noted by the casual visitor are honesty, inquisitiveness and hospitality. Honesty in Finland is not merely the best policy; it is the only policy. A Finnish peasant would rather give you a shilling than rob you of one. He is too unaccustomed to tourists to have acquired the vice of swindling them.

His habit of asking innumerable questions upon personal matters that others would leave unmentioned, is, in part, his method of gaining information of the world beyond his borders, and in part his method of showing a kindly interest in your concerns and helping you to feel at home. His inquiries range from the age of your wife and the amount of your salary, to your reasons for visiting his country and your opinions upon his manners and customs. He rarely bothers you about his politics or

¹ Related by Mrs. Stockman in "Finland and her Lakes" in the *Pall Mall Magazine* for August, 1897.

yours unless you introduce the question, but he is insatiable as to your schools, your churches, and your intellectual development generally.

His hospitality is so unbounded that it leaves you with almost a feeling of shame as of one having illegitimately imposed upon his extraordinarily good nature. One personal experience will suffice. I was travelling on a small steamer and got into conversation with a young medical student who had, by private study, acquired a marvellous knowledge of our language. Hearing me mention that I was interested in Finnish art, he asked for my address in Helsingfors, and promised that when he returned to the capital he would call upon me and take me to see certain pictures that would not otherwise be open for my inspection. I thanked him, and, to tell the truth, did not expect to see him again. To my surprise he called upon me a few days later, took me from place to place in Helsingfors and showed me numerous interesting works of art. He invited me to dine with him and came to see me off when I left the country. This kind of thing is not unusual. It is, in fact, as common as possible. It is the result of a kind of generous feeling for the stranger of ancient origin, mixed, in these later days, with a pardonable pride in the recent achievements of the race in matters of government and education.

The Tavast, whom Topelius describes as behindhand and stubborn, has been the subject of numerous humorous stories, probably about as true as similar stories told in other lands about those who are considered to be rather slow-witted. For instance, there was once a farmer who wanted to kill a bear that had damaged his crops. As he was afraid to tread down his own corn by walking through

it, he got four of his friends to carry him through the field shoulder high.

It is also related that when the price of salt became too high, a number of them met to discuss the question of sowing salt instead of wheat in their fields.

But the best of these stories, and also the most incredible, is that of seven men who were working in a field, when one of them saw a fish in the water. In order to kill it, he swung his scythe vigorously round, with the result that he cut off his own head. The others accused one of his comrades of having done the deed. He denied the wicked charge and, in order to show what really happened, swung his scythe over his own head in the same manner as his unfortunate companion had done, and with the same result. The others, in turn, repeated the operation, and the last, trying to find out how all the accidents had occurred, also cut off his own head in the search for truth.

The very qualities that make the Finn such a worthy citizen at home, are responsible for his success as a colonist. Emigration is the only resource left to those who, at times, feel their liberty in danger from the bureaucracy of Russia. At certain periods, when the terrors of Russian rule have been more than usually severe, emigration has proceeded at a rate something like that with which our Irish neighbours at one time left their homes. During the days of the hated Bobrikoff régime, nearly two thousand a month arrived in the United States of America alone. In 1908 there were more than two hundred and fifty thousand of them living in the States, the population remaining in the mother-land not numbering more than three millions.

By the Americans the Finns are regarded as amongst the most desirable class of immigrant. Their physique is excellent; their thrift leads to the acquisition of property, and they are both moral and temperate. They are employed in the mining of iron ore and in the handling of this heavy product at transfer stations and depots. As this is a species of hard labour which finds little favour with the English-speaking sections of the working classes, the Finns have proved more than ordinarily acceptable. In other districts they are coal-miners, gold-diggers and salmon-fishers.

They are an important factor in American industrial life, and in many places their influence is also felt in the civic and political life of the community in which they live, and this influence is, according to all American writers, for good.

Finns, on arrival at New York, usually proceed to one of the places where their fellow-countrymen have congregated and where they are sure of meeting with relatives and friends. They remain a year or two till they are accustomed to American ways and have acquired some facility in speaking English. They then select either some other part of the country as their home, or they begin in earnest to look for homes of their own and a livelihood in the immediate vicinity. Once naturalised and full-fledged residents of a city or town, it is not uncommon for them to be selected for such offices of trust as members of city councils and local legislatures, post-masters, justices of the peace, and various county appointments.

Under the influence of new conditions they have turned their attention to questions of religious organisa-

tion and reform and have established a new form of Lutheran church, which has grown to such an extent as to require the foundation of a theological seminary to cope with the demand for pastors.

"The temperance societies of the Finns at their inception carried out simply the literal or liberal meaning of the word 'temperance,' making moderation the chief requirement. To-day temperance with the Finns [in America] means total abstinence. The temperance halls, some of which cost as much as ten thousand dollars, are used for temperance meetings on Sabbath afternoons, but on week-days are often utilised for the presentation of Finnish dramas or for social events. Not a few of them are fitted up with a large stage and scenery. At the Sabbath afternoon meetings it is not uncommon for one of the members to be called publicly to account when he is known to have broken his temperance pledge."¹

Very few Finns have ever been refused admission to the States, and their stability of character and excellence of physique have attracted the attention of several Emigration Offices. As farmers they have found a hearty welcome in the Canadian North-West, in South Africa and in Cuba, but the financial and educational advantages of the United States have in most cases proved the greatest attractive forces. The fact also that here they can find their fellow-countrymen in large numbers is another inducement to the Finns to turn their exiled footsteps to the land of the Stars and Stripes.

During the Bobrikoff tyranny, feeling amongst these Finns ran very high, and numerous were the meetings they held, and indignant were the protests that found

¹ McClure.

utterance. But of far more value to their persecuted countrymen than speeches or resolutions, was the financial assistance they so liberally rendered to those in trouble, to enable them to escape from a rule under which their passionate love of liberty was being wantonly and cruelly outraged.

CHAPTER X

GOVERNMENT

THE seat of government is the capital, Helsingfors. The two outstanding features of this city are cleanliness and youth, two qualities not always so closely allied. As in the case of many another place on the continent of Europe the view of the city from the sea is eminently picturesque, but, unlike so many other places in the south, a nearer view reveals no blemishes. There are neither slums nor smells. Along the sunny Mediterranean, in out-of-the-way corners of France and Germany, and in other districts and in other lands you may have to feast your sense of sight at the risk of for ever destroying your sense of smell. But in Helsingfors there is nothing to offend. The streets are clean, the water pure and the air free from taint. There are no horrid factories polluting the air and defiling the public buildings in the name of progress and the service of Mammon. The churches, houses, banks and offices are as clean and bright as a young lady going out to meet her sweetheart.

Along the water's edge, near to where the steamers anchor, is the Market Square. This square, in the morning, is crowded with buyers and sellers and with booths covered and uncovered. The fascination of the place is indescribable. About noon everybody packs up, and, as the people depart, they leave behind them a litter of odd bits of meat, scraps of vegetables and derelict

Day of California





[To face p. 173]
SWEEPING THE MARKET-PLACE, HELSINGFORS



DETACHED BELL-TOWER

pieces of fish. But the litter is not long allowed to remain. Hardly has the last cart gone before an army of scavengers arrives with big carts and little carts, brooms and brushes. The women sweep away methodically, collecting the refuse and piling it into little heaps, which are at once removed by the carts. When all this has been accomplished, another army comes upon the scene with big hose-pipes, and floods the square with water. Good drains, expert brushing and sweeping, a bright sun and a dry wind soon leave the stones as clean as a new pin. You could eat your meals off them. Flocks of pigeons descend into the square, bathe themselves in the streams and pick up any little bits of food that may have been left behind. They are so tame that you can plant a camera within a foot of them and they will not budge. They care little for you or your machinery; their very helplessness and courage assure them, at all times, a kind and respectful treatment, though occasionally their lack of fear causes them to be run over and crushed by the passing carriages.

The same aversion to dirt is seen in the parks, where the little wire baskets for waste paper and orange skins are not merely hung up for show but actually used. The doorsteps of the workmen's dwellings suggest an internal purity that I have had no opportunity of investigating, but I am willing to believe that there is not a dirty corner in the whole capital.

Near to the Market Place there is a new fountain by Wallgren. The chief figure in the design is that of a young girl rising from the waters. The girl symbolises Helsingfors, full of life, young and fresh, growing vigorously upon the edge of the sea. A better symbol could

not have been found, though there are contradictory opinions as to the claims of the artist's model to much personal beauty. Helsingfors is the young bride amongst the matronly capitals of Europe. For, be it remembered, Helsingfors was not always the capital of Finland. In the days when the Swedes governed the country, Åbo was the seat of government. When Finland passed into the hands of Russia, the inconveniences of a capital so near to Stockholm and so far from St. Petersburg were speedily recognised, and in 1812, three years after Russia had finally overcome the resistance to her arms, Helsingfors was declared the capital.

Helsingfors has been several times destroyed by fire and there can be few buildings or streets that are a hundred years old. About 1828 a German architect, Karl Ludwig Engel, who had settled in St. Petersburg, was brought over to superintend the re-building of the city, and to him are due the classic buildings in which are housed the University, the Senate and other important administrative and educational bodies. He built also a Lutheran church, the domed mass of St. Nicholas that dominates the city when seen from a distance. But the edifices that the city owes to Engel and his followers are of a type the most ancient, that of the buildings of Greece. The modern buildings that are in any way original and national will be dealt with later in the chapter on Finnish Art.

The approach to the capital from the sea reveals the impregnability of the city from a naval point of view. At the entrance to the harbour lies a fleet of fortified rocks and islands of grey granite over whose sides the ugly muzzles of the most powerful of modern weapons

shout their message of warning and defiance. One of these islands, Sveaborg, more ugly and threatening than the rest, was attacked, but unsuccessfully, by the combined fleets of France and England at the time of the Crimean War. It constitutes a menace not only to the would-be invader, but also to the would-be rebel upon land. It is so fortified that it could equally easily turn its guns upon the foe either from without or within. Its very aspect seems to suggest that it has its eye upon both, though there is no more loyal part of the Russian Empire than Finland when her rights are not interfered with. To understand how secure from attack Helsingfors really is, one must remember that the entrance to the inner harbour is through a cleft in a rock which is only just wide enough to allow of the passage of one vessel at a time.

The general aspect of the city never fails to please the visitor who arrives by sea. Everything is bright and clean, and the idlers on the quay seem to have gathered there purely for the purpose of bidding you welcome. There are no slums or dirty quays to perambulate before you arrive at your hotel. The city lies in a wide crescent round the shores of its beautiful bay. In the centre of the curve stands the white dazzling mass of the Lutheran Cathedral. On the right are the red walls, white roofs and golden, not gilded, cupolas of the Russian church. The white roofs of the latter edifice are so striking, especially when seen in the summer against a background of fleckless blue, that one seeks instinctively for some explanation of so unusual a sight. The explanation is given in the charming little story that relates how a Russian empress once visited Helsingfors in the winter,

and was so struck with the effect of the snow-covered roofs that she asked the authorities to make it permanent by painting them white.

On the quay is a low and unimposing building, the palace of the Russian Emperor, the railings of which are ornamented with gilded eagles. The Tsar of Russia is at the head of the State. He is Finland's Grand Duke. In these days he holds the position held by the King of Sweden before the annexation. His powers are great and wide-reaching. The various officials who assist him in the work of governing the country are responsible to him alone, and cannot be called to account by the Diet. The executive power resides in the Tsar only, and therefore there is nothing in Finland corresponding to our Parliament. But it is laid down in the fundamental laws of the Constitution, which every Tsar has sworn to keep, that this executive power shall only be used in accordance with laws either instituted or consented to by the Diet.

The Grand Duke appoints to all offices of State; he can confer nobility, pardon criminals, and decide foreign questions. He cannot impose any new taxes without the consent of the Diet, but he can fix the salaries of State officials and, to some extent, regulate the expenditure of the public revenues. The funds necessary for the work of government are derivable from the ordinary revenues of the country, and if there be any surplus when the year's balance is struck, the monarch has the right to direct in what way that surplus shall be spent. Customs duties are fixed by him without the consent or consideration of the Diet, but they are applied, like any of the other funds, according to the financial needs of the land. The other sources of revenue are the Crown Lands, the taxes

levied by the Diet, and sundry fees received by the various State offices.

The government of Finland is carried out by the State Council, or Senate, which has two sections: one, the Economic, corresponding to our Cabinet; and the other, the Judicial, constituting a Supreme Court. The two departments do not meet except for special purposes. At the time of writing, this Senate is composed of men who are Russians to all intents and purposes. They are russianised Finns, few of whom, if any, speak either Finnish or Swedish; and their decisions on any point in no way reflect the opinions of the people. The head of the Senate is the Governor-General, who by law is one of the most important and independent of all the officials in the Russian Empire. In 1910 and 1911, during the attacks of Russia upon the Finnish Constitution, the representative of the Grand Duke was General Seyn, the pupil and friend of the hated Bobrikoff. He cared so little about the opinions or wishes of the people whom he was controlling, that he rarely left his house during the whole of the dispute except to visit St. Petersburg. He was never present at any meeting of the Senate, and he never received any visitors except Russian gendarmes and senators. The senators, being Russian in sympathy to a man, were, like himself, ignorant not only of the language but even of the customs and conditions of the country they were supposed to govern. Seyn would not see a single Finnish official, even in order to receive certain reports that rightly could not be handed to anyone else. The only communications he held with Finland were over the telephone.

A senate of this type gives most of the offices at its

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disposal to Russians, who are out of all sympathy with the folks they insult and abuse. The officials are mostly so incompetent and corrupt that the few really clever and capable men amongst them are worked almost to death. The Senate cannot exercise any other power but that which is entrusted to it by the sovereign, and all its decisions are made in his name. The Governor-General and the Minister Secretary of State in St. Petersburg form the link between the Grand Duke and the Cabinet. The Secretary of State must, by law, be a Finn.

Another important official is the Procurator. He is the watch-dog of legality and it is his business to see that the law is obeyed in all Government and public departments. He has also to attend the meetings of the Senate, and in the event of any action being taken that conflicts with Finnish law he is bound to make representations to this effect both to the Senate and to the Governor-General. If no notice is taken of his protests he has then to report the whole matter direct to the Grand Duke. Such a person, if loyal to the Constitution, is apt to prove a thorn in the flesh of monarchs or senators whose chief desire is the infringement of that Constitution. Between 1909 and the beginning of 1911 three occupants of this high position were successively dismissed because they were honest men and true. Finally, in order to procure some one who would wink at legal irregularities Senator Hosiaïnoff was appointed. He had been a senator for only a short time, and had never studied Finnish law, although it was his especial function to see that the law was faithfully observed. He was purely a Russian jurist, and not one of the first rank, and yet he was selected to watch over the liberties of Finland. No more striking

example of the disregard of Russia for the Grand Duchy could well be found than in this shameful appointment.

At one time the Diet consisted of four estates: Nobles, Clergy, Burghers and Peasants. There was nothing like this constitution anywhere else. Most lands have had three estates; England has two. It was the especial glory of Finland to have had something so decidedly its own as a House of Peasants. The four estates were abolished in 1906, and now the representatives are the representatives of the people as a whole and they meet in one chamber. Still, so curious a Constitution as that which disappeared only five years ago is of historic interest and affords an excuse for the next few paragraphs.

Every noble family that was duly inscribed on the rolls of the "House of Nobles" had the right of representing the Order of the Nobility at the Diet; and this right was exercised either by the head of the family, or, in case of his abstention, by another member of the family, following the order of primogeniture, or by a member of another noble house, to whom the head of the family had delegated his right by power of attorney. At the Diets from 1863 to 1906 an average of about 140 noble families was represented. In ancient times the noblemen belonged to the three categories of landed proprietors, warriors and government officials, but later they were found amongst the ranks of men of science, journalists, business men, pedagogues and artists. When the House of Nobles was dissolved many of its members gave up their titles and took another name. They had no longer any responsibilities as an order, and they voluntarily became ordinary civilians in name as in fact.

The Order of the Clergy comprised the Archbishop as president and the two Bishops as members. There were also twenty-eight representatives elected by the ordinary clergymen of the Lutheran Church within the three dioceses, one or two representatives of the university, and from three to six representatives of the professors and teachers of the lyceums and other public schools.

The Order of the Burgesses was not in recent times quite what its name indicated, that is, a congregation from the towns, consisting of burghers in the proper sense of the word—merchants and tradesmen. Every member of a town commune, who was taxed according to the communal law and did not belong to the Nobility, nor had the elective franchise in the Order of the Clergy, had the right of election and of elective franchise in a town, except soldiers, sailors, domestic servants and labourers.

The members of the Order of the Peasants were chosen by means of indirect election, one representative for each of the sixty-two rural jurisdictions of the country. The peasants chose a body of electors and these electors chose the actual representatives.

In order that any given resolution could become law there had to be a majority of three estates to one. In the case of fresh expenditure the four estates had to be unanimous. If the necessary agreement could not be reached, and yet the matter under dispute was one which was pressing, it was sent to a Committee whose business it was to deal with such questions. The Committee was temporarily increased by the addition of fifteen members from each estate and the question at issue was decided by a two-thirds majority.

At the present time there is one chamber, and the members are elected on a proportional system which gives adequate protection to minorities. Every adult over the age of twenty-four, including women, has a right to vote, and women possess the right also to sit in Parliament. A writer in *The Standard* (September 24, 1910), says of the women who are in the Diet: "They are mostly of middle age, grave, and even portentously solemn. They are apparently proof against all temptations of vanity; they dress with quakerish simplicity, and are completely absorbed in their duties. The comic-paper vision of the flirting lady member vanishes in face of the actual spectacle of women who outdo the gravest males in correctitude of demeanour. Of the earnestness of the Finnish female deputies their male colleagues speak in high terms. As to their usefulness opinion is more divided. 'They make no difference at all,' said one member. 'They are a nuisance, but only a little nuisance,' was the opinion of another. 'They are quite helpful on a number of questions,' remarked a third, 'but, unfortunately, they have never had an opportunity of showing what they are really capable of. Since women were elected to the Diet the burning questions have been almost exclusively political, and there has been little opportunity for discussing those social problems on which their opinion would be useful.' 'One thing is evident,' said a fourth deputy, 'and that is that women will not vote for women. Females compose 53 per cent. of the electorate, and yet they form only 8 per cent. of the Diet. Most of the women who are deputies, themselves voted for male candidates, and the number elected would be still fewer but for the system of proportional representation.'"

The meetings of the Diet, or the Landtag, were held until 1911 in the banquet-hall of the Voluntary Fire Brigade Station. There was little of the pomp and circumstance usually associated with such gatherings, and there was about as little to appeal to the imagination as there would be in the meetings of an English County Council. At one end of the hall was a statue, LAW, by Runeberg, the Finnish sculptor. The hall was unsuitable for a Parliament. It was a large oblong with the members' chairs and desks arranged in concentric curves before the President's seat and the tribunal from which the members spoke if they had anything to say which would take more than two minutes.

In the centre of the arc were the Moderates, with the Conservatives on their right, and the Socialists and Radicals on the left. The Landtag has now removed to yet another private building, quite unworthy of its functions or its traditions. The Diet had planned a large, handsome building, to be erected on Observatory Hill, where it would have shared with the Russian cathedral and the two large Lutheran churches the honour of adding to the picturesque appearance of the capital as seen from the Bay. The Tsar refused to sanction the expenditure of the money, and the project of a new Parliament House is therefore hung up for awhile. But no one who knows anything of the quiet patience of the Finn doubts that they will some day achieve their object, and crown the hill above the harbour with the legislative palace on which they have set their hearts.

Each deputy receives a salary of £56 for the session of three months, and is allowed to travel free, during that

time, on the Finnish railways, practically all of which belong to the State.

Parties change in their ambitions and constitutions from time to time, but the following is a fair account of them at the present day. First of all there is the Swedish party which represents the decreasing Swedish population. Its numbers are few, but they have been the protagonists in the struggle with Russia. They belong to a type frank and generous, a little superficial but impulsive, and Tory by tradition. They are excellent men of business and not over-friendly to the new Finnish democracy, but keen nationalists and tenacious defenders of the Constitution. They speak Swedish and claim to be superior to the rest of their countrymen in enterprise and culture. Until the national movement of about fifty or sixty years ago they practically monopolised all the official posts and the teaching appointments and they were, as they are still, the leaders of society.

The Finns, Old and Young, belong to another type, more reserved and serious, moody and romantic, rather jealous of the Swedish predominance in culture, but more liberal and democratic in sympathy. The young Finns have aims something like those of our own more advanced Liberals and are animated by a furious hatred of any form of Russian interference with the fundamental laws of the country.

The Agrarians look upon themselves as the special representatives of the small peasant landowners, but they are, in general, at one with the Young Finns and usually act with them.

The Old Finns are Conservative, and their jealousy of the Swedes inclined them, under Bobrikoff, to compromise

with Russia. They accepted posts from which their fellow-countrymen had been driven for their loyalty, and when themselves accused of disloyalty made the excuse that it was better for them to hold these posts than to allow them to go into the hands of the common enemy. The Old Finns aim at peace and are more willing than any other party to look for and accept means of compromise. Latterly they have been driven by circumstances to a more democratic policy, and many of their adherents have forsaken them to take sides with the Young Finns.

The strongest party numerically is the Socialist. The Socialists hold to the principle that the only true source of wealth is labour, and if their influence were equal to their numbers they would legislate accordingly. As it is they are content to try to effect changes in the ordinary laws such as those aimed at by our own Labour Party.

The writer to *The Standard* from whom we have already quoted, speaking of a meeting of the Diet at which he was present, describes the various types to be met with in the assembly. Thus: "The Finnish representatives of the town populations are curiously typical of their constituencies. Perhaps the chief note of Helsingfors and the larger cities is their brisk cosmopolitanism. It is a feature rather unexpected in a latitude so near the Arctic Circle, and in a land still popularly associated with reindeer sleighs and ice-huts. All kinds of languages are more or less current, and customs are borrowed from everywhere, though without prejudice to a very sturdy sense of nationality. One is not, therefore, surprised to find among the town deputies an epitome of all northern

and western Europe. One doctor of law, who has studied at Paris, is French from hat to boots; another has quite a German style; still another prides himself on being excessively English, and often it is not merely a piece of amiable self-delusion, for it is not unusual to find an excellent command of English among this far-away people. Put these men abroad, and it would be a matter of some difficulty to place them precisely. But with the provincial deputies it is quite otherwise. For the most part they are pure Finns, with quite a decided trace still of the Mongol in their broad-cheeked faces and squat, sturdy figures. Speaking a language which isolates them from the rest of the whole people, they are a taciturn, stolid race, slow in thought and action, tenacious and obstinate, capable and industrious, peace-loving, but possessed of almost dogged courage. Here and there one marks a genuine Lapp face, incongruous enough with a tweed suit, and demanding rather the complement of a set of skins. On the whole one would say this is the most truly Labour Parliament the world has seen. The majority of the deputies are men who have fought and exacted tribute from Nature in her most unwilling mood, cultivating a soil frostbound for seven months of the year, felling timber in the great forest-lands of the interior, or fishing on the vast lakes and stormy northern seas. Faces tanned by frost and sun, rough beards of russet or tow colour, encircling the face after the manner of the old-style English labourer, shock heads, and uncouth figures mix oddly with the smart cosmopolitans from the towns. But there is a rough intelligence and an unmistakable air of efficiency about the most bucolic of the deputies. The national passion for education, as strong

as in Scotland, has had its effects, and each of these men is perfectly qualified to play his part in a national assembly."

Every Finn is a politician. The working-men all read newspapers which are dependent on political news and articles for their support. Sensationalism and crime are little in favour as selling qualities in the daily press. In some cases, where the political views expressed appeal to only a limited circle of readers, the papers are run on almost philanthropic lines by men who are willing to pay daily for the dissemination of their ideas.

The various parties have quarrelled vigorously in the past both in the press and on the platform, and abuse has, at times, been freely distributed. But they are all at one in their opposition to Russian tyranny. In the face of any attack upon their dearly cherished liberties they unite and stand solidly together as one man.

The election of the President is carried out by ballot, each member, when called upon, coming up and placing his vote in a glass goblet like one of those in which gold fish are usually kept. The work of the Diet is carried on in a peculiar manner. There are a number of Standing Committees which sit at the same time as the Diet and prepare matters for its discussion. According to the Constitution, the Diet should meet at regular intervals, at one time every five years, now annually. The members are elected for three years, but recent Diets have been so little to the liking of Russia that some of them have been dissolved after sitting for intervals as short as two or three weeks or even for five days. In assemblies with such short lives the best man and the one most generally approved is not the best speaker, but the one with the

richest endowment of common sense and knowledge of business.

Any one writing in these troublous times is naturally tempted to deal at more or less length with the Russian endeavours to deprive the Diet of its powers. The story of the recent movements towards the Russification of Finland is a long and exciting one, and if the present writer avoids it, it is not for want of sympathy with one of the most delightful and progressive people in Europe, but because it is rather outside the scope of this book. But, for the sake of those who may wish to know in brief something of the matters in dispute, the following short account may suffice. The time has not yet come when the story of Russia's latest crime can be properly told, and only the future will reveal what steps the Finns may be able to take in the way of the preservation of their independence.

The liberties of the Grand Duchy have always been more or less dependent on the whims of successive Tsars, although each Tsar in turn has sworn to accept the "fundamental laws." In 1899 the Finnish Diet was reduced to a mere consultative body by means of an Imperial Manifesto. In June, 1910, the Duma passed the new law which is the immediate cause of so much bad feeling. It deprives the Finnish Legislature of all real voice in most of the things that are of importance to a people that prizes its liberty. In matters of legislation that are held to affect the general interest of the Russian Empire, the opinion of the Senate only and not of the Diet is to be sought, and if the Senate decline to pronounce any opinion then the matter will become law

without their consent. In a few cases the opinion of the Diet may be asked, but this is a mere form, as their consent is not required or necessary. The matters that have thus been removed entirely from the control of the Diet include the imposition of taxes, the question of military service, the administration of public education, laws relating to the press and public meetings, the monetary system, the employment of Russian officials, and the rights of aliens. By way of some kind of compensation, Finland is to have two members in the Russian Imperial Council and four members, to be elected by the Diet, in the Duma.

The Diet of 1910 refused to consider the measure on the ground that it was beyond the power of the Duma to legislate for Finland and was promptly dissolved. The new Diet, elected in January, 1911, practically left the position of parties unchanged and the whole of them solidly banded together to resist the new laws. The first important result of the new legislation was that the Duma took upon itself to bring in a bill to deal with the rights of Russians in Finland and another to determine the amount that Finland should contribute to Russia in lieu of military service. The discussion of the results that followed in Finland itself would lead us too far from our present duty of setting forth the most prominent features of Finnish life and manners for the benefit of those who take any interest in the way in which other people live.

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PIONEERS (AFTER HALONEN)

CHAPTER XI

COMMUNICATIONS

THE first roads were those made by the frost and the snow. The first footpaths were the results of the endeavours of riders and pedestrians to discover view-points from the summits of the hills. In the course of time these footpaths became roads, but stuck to the hills so that the way from point to point is usually encumbered with a number of short steep slopes that might easily have been avoided had the roads originated in a less peculiar fashion. They are apt to temporarily unnerve the timid traveller by their steep gradients ; but there is no cause for fear, for the Finnish pony is sure-footed to the last degree and prefers to walk down the short sharp hills rather than run unless the command or the whip of his master urges to greater speed. When the beast does fly down the slope the passenger gets a rare jolt at the bottom where, as often as not, a water-course crosses the path. You bounce into the air like an india-rubber ball, to the discomfort of your person and the detriment of your temper.

The post-roads are kept in repair by the owners of the land through which they pass, and there are sign-posts along the route telling on whom each section depends for repairs. It is the duty of the parish officials to see that each section of the road is properly kept by those to whom it is apportioned, but occasionally the officials are singu-

larly lacking in severity; or their ideas as to what constitutes a good road are somewhat behind the times. Great snow-ploughs are kept in readiness to preserve these roads in a passable state during the winter months.

Stations, or post-houses, have existed since the sixteenth century, there being on the average one to every fifteen kilometres. The post-house is bound by law to supply travellers with the means of getting on to the next stage. The tariff is fixed and is at the rate of about 1½d. per kilometre for one horse and vehicle. If you happen to be the second comer and the fresh horse has already been sent out you must, if the demand be made, pay double, but even then the rate is so low that posting is comparatively inexpensive. The person in charge of the post-house has the right to requisition the horses of the peasants no matter in what work they may be employed at the time when they are required.

There is a remarkable lack of comfort in the vehicles at the disposal of the traveller in the country districts, especially when one considers that posting for purposes of business has been the recognised way of travelling for centuries in those districts where water communication is not available. The low country cart without springs is a vehicle calculated to test the endurance and the good-temper of the most equable of tourists. It has a narrow seat placed over the shafts; and its hardness, combined with the rutty character of the roads, is a trial to be sampled (but not long endured) for the sake of the novelty.

A slightly more comfortable cart is that known as the Åbo cart. The coachman's proper place is behind, that of the passenger in front. As the reins have to be held over one side and the driver has to look round the body

of his fare in order to know where he is driving, some skill is required in the management of the steeds. At times the coachman gets over the difficulty of an impeded view by standing to his work, though how he preserves his balance in the lanes and smaller roads when the cart sways from side to side, or bounces up and down, is one of the problems that it would take a gymnast to solve. In winter-time, sledges of many shapes and sizes find favour. In places where the waterways offer apparently insurmountable obstacles to wheeled traffic, the carriages are taken across in ferry-boats. There are many field-gates which would offer considerable delay if it were not for the small bare-headed children that find some delight and not a little profit in helping the traveller on his way by waiting in readiness for him and opening the gates upon his approach.

Shooting the rapids, which has already been described, is one of the most striking and common of the means of communication along the turbulent streams of the northern part of the country. Before the days of railways, communication between the different provinces and with the Continent was rather restricted, and the Finn, fond of his house and of his lonely independence, was little inclined to go abroad. But war and famine compelled the people sometimes to desert their homes. In 1867, for instance, famine drove many thousands out on the highways. Cottages were deserted, fields were left to run wild, and entire families turned out to beg. But these despairing crowds, with their hungry hands stretched out for bread wherever they came, never broke open a locked door, never plundered a lonely farmstead, never touched the sheep grazing on the hill-sides. People who had

anything to give gave freely, but many of the poorest of the wanderers, sick and hopeless, died by the wayside.

The introduction of railways has made such wholesale emigration from a famine-stricken countryside less necessary, as it is now possible to convey food and help to those in need. Most of the railways belong to the State, only 307 kilometres out of a total of 3550 kilometres being, in 1910, in private hands. The gauge of all the State railways is five feet, that is, the same as the gauge of most of the European State lines. Four of the private lines have adopted the same gauge, but the others are of narrower and more variable dimensions. If the population of the country be taken into account, Finland stands high as regards the rail mileage per head.

In consequence of the relatively large area of Finland (greater than that of England and Italy) and its sparse population, as well as its northern situation, hard climate and comparatively infertile soil, it has been anything but an easy task for the Finnish people to build any railways at all. It was only by being content with the most economical equipment and a very modest degree of speed that any construction was possible. Only in the most southern part of the country are the metals of such a weight as to permit of a speed of something less than forty miles per hour. On the northern lines, where the traffic is smaller, the roads are less solidly built and the greatest speed is not twenty miles per hour.

Towards the end of 1840 the Minister of Roads and Communications proposed the building of a railway from Helsingfors northward to the point where the Tavastland water system begins. The idea was to have cars drawn by horses—a kind of glorified tramway. The line was

to end at the lakes, whence the journey could be continued by steamer. Politica, and other considerations caused this primitive plan to be dropped. Some years later the old project was revived, but, in accordance with the great development in railway matters that had taken place in the interval, it was proposed that a locomotive railroad should be built from Helsingfors to the town of Tavastehus, a distance of about sixty-seven miles. The work on this short line began in March, 1857, but progressed slowly and with characteristic Finnish deliberation, so that it was five years before the first line was opened.

When the capital had been connected with the Tavastehus lake system in this way, it was proposed to draw a railway from this line to Lahtis and make a connection with the Päijänne lake system, but as the Tsar Alexander II was particularly interested in a railway between Finland and the Russian capital, the Diet of 1867 consented to accept the Imperial proposition for the building of a railway that should connect Helsingfors with St. Petersburg and both with the flourishing port of Viborg. The undertaking met with great obstacles, as the country was destined to pass through one of the worst periods of death and famine that it has ever experienced. The death-rate in 1868 was so great that the population decreased from 1,800,000 to 1,700,000. At last, a foreign loan, on exceptionally hard terms, was negotiated and this time the work of construction was undertaken with such energy that the whole of it was open for traffic in September, 1870.

An important change now took place in the development of the communications. The traffic of the first line had called forth a general feeling of disappointment, partly because the proposed cost of construction had been

under-estimated by about half, and also because the income from the line had in no way fulfilled expectations. The new line, on the other hand, showed a profit of four per cent. even on the first year's working. It thus seemed possible that, even in Finland, railways might be built without any great cost to the State. The Finnish Government and the representatives of the people could with far more confidence and hope now take further steps for the development of the railway communications of the country and begin the work upon a railway from Tavastehus to Tammerfors and also from Toijala station on this line to Åbo the former capital. The new line was opened in June, 1876. A private line built to the seaport of Hängo, which was opened in 1873, and which was originally planned by a Russian company, was bought up by the Finnish Government, as the Russian company were unable to maintain the traffic on the line.

The line to Åbo and Tammerfors afforded the country an unpleasant surprise—the cost of construction was higher than that of the Petersburg line, the cost rising from 71,000 Finnish marks the kilometre to 92,000. This caused the Government to attempt a cheaper style of building, especially as the next lines projected were to be laid in the northern and more sparsely populated districts. After lengthy and heated discussions as to whether the new lines should be built with the same gauge as the earlier railways, or with a narrow gauge like the Norwegian lines, it was decided to try to build the line with a wide gauge, but with a lighter sub-structure and rails. The building of the next line, that to the seaport town of Wasa on the Gulf of Bothnia, showed a wonderfully good result, the cost of construction being only about

half of that of the lines to Tammerfors and Åbo, though this brilliant result was to some extent due to the favourable territorial conditions. The same style of construction was followed when the Wasa line was continued to Uleaborg on the Gulf of Bothnia. This line has since been extended to Torneå on the border of Sweden and later to Rovaniemi situated in Lapland on the Arctic Circle.

The next railway was one from Kouvola on the Petersburg line through Savolaks to the towns of St. Michel and Kuopio, a line since carried north to Kajana and south to Kotka. This is one of the lines most frequented by tourists. It satisfied the chief wants of the Savolaks district and attention was then turned to the connection of the distant towns of Sortavala and Joensuu with Viborg. It is a branch of this line that carries the traveller to the wonders of Imatra. Other lines have been constructed connecting the various main routes that we have described and a glance at the railway map of the country will show that the railway system of Finland consists of a line running east and west along the southern coast with three northerly branches. A system such as this suffices to some extent for the traffic north and south but it provides little or no communication east and west except in the case of the chief line in the south. Places which in reality lie at a distance of only two hundred kilometres from each other have sometimes as much as eight hundred kilometres of railway between them and it is often cheaper and quicker to use some other means of communication. It thus became necessary to draw a line east and west to connect the northern arms, and one Diet decided to make a beginning with a line from the Karelian railway to Nyslott, a town picturesquely situated

on the lake of Saima, while another Diet decided to continue this line to the north-west so as to cut the Savolaks line at Pieksämäki and then to carry it still farther west till the connection across country was complete.

For strategic purposes the Russians are interesting themselves in still further extensions of the Finnish railways. The Finnish line is not to terminate at Rovaniemi, but to be advanced to the town of Sodankylä, and the Norwegian Government has been requested to grant a concession for a branch of this line to be carried to Varanger Fiord. This would enable the Russians to make use of ice-free waters on the Atlantic. When all the various lines and branches that are contemplated are complete it will be possible to send troops from St. Petersburg to the Varanger Fiord in less than two days. Owing to recent changes in the gauges of some of the lines the Russian rolling stock can now pass over every foot of the Finnish railways. Probably when Russia has been permitted to trample on Finland she will turn her attention to some of the other small free States of northern Europe. She covets an open water port in northern Norway, and would be willing to guarantee the integrity of the country if this were granted to her, but the way in which she has broken all her vows and promises with regard to Finland shows that she could never be relied upon to keep her word if her ambitions for territorial expansion called for the suppression of the weaker neighbour on whose land she had fraudulently obtained a footing.

The Finnish railways present many points of interest to the traveller. The booking-office clerks are often girls, and they attend to one's wants with a courtesy and grace that is not conspicuous in the young men who set out to

seek fortune in this direction in other countries. It is not customary to tip porters except in the capital; and once, when I forgot that I was in a land where the officials have not learned to be rapacious before being servicable, I got my proffered offering returned with a look of scorn that lasted me for many a mile.

The railway ticket is printed in three languages, and there are no remarks about by-laws on the back. The notices in the train are in six languages—Finnish, Swedish, Russian, German, French and English.

The trains are unambitious in the matter of speed and the journey from Helsingfors to St. Petersburg—a distance of about 276 miles—is accomplished by the express trains in about fourteen hours, that is, at a speed of under twenty miles an hour. But what the trains lack in speed they make up in comfort and cheapness. The cars are excellent and the sleeping arrangements are such as are not open to any but the well-to-do in England.

The departure of the night-express to St. Petersburg is one of the events of the day in Helsingfors. During the greater part of the twenty-four hours the station indulges in a profound sleep, but towards evening a most disturbing wakefulness becomes apparent. The station begins to fill, and long before the hour of departure arrives the platform is crowded to excess. There are students of both sexes, men in grey, fawn or blue uniforms with marvellous braid and trimmings, hundreds of conventionally dressed men and women, a few native costumes from the provinces, newspaper boys with red caps adorned with blue bands, Russian soldiers in dirty, untidy blouses, and, last of all, a detachment of the Salvation Army. As the time of departure draws near the crowd

increases and a stranger is apt to be bewildered with the multitude. Most of the spectators are there from sheer interest in the proceedings. It is not that they are about to travel themselves or to say farewell to departing friends. They have only come to see the train off. This is a favourite recreation in all parts of the country, especially on Sundays, when the stations are crowded for the arrival of every train. The railway platform is the village club, and at little kiosks and at humbler wheelbarrows, fruit, sweets, newspapers and cigarettes are in great demand.

Popular young ladies are escorted to the station by troops of friends who pin flowers on them, hand them bouquets and generally cover them with the offerings of the gardens.

There are rarely any first-class compartments on the train. If you are wealthy enough and foolish enough to purchase a first-class ticket, you pay the price of a second and third added together. When the guard arrives, you show him your precious possession, and he puts you in a second-class compartment, sticks the words "First Class" on the window, and goes away grinning.

The station bell gives the signal for departure, but nothing departs. The bell rings a second time, the guard blows his whistle, the engine shrieks a reply, and then the wheels begin to go round. No Finnish train can start without these four signals—bell, bell, whistle, shriek.

There is a notice on every coach that passengers must not stand on the open platforms at the ends of the cars while the train is in motion. These notices are usually studiously disregarded. The gradients are mostly slight ;

there are a few cuttings in the granite, but there are no tunnels.

Along the line there are millions upon millions of logs of wood piled up for use as fuel. At some of the smaller stations you may find shooting-galleries, refreshment kiosks, and other forms of amusement. The little groups of pleasure-seekers are never so busy that they cannot find time to turn round and wave their handkerchiefs to the passengers. It is strictly forbidden to walk on the line, but again the rule is one that is seriously disobeyed. One man even cycled, and difficult as it may appear to ride a bicycle on a railroad track it is no worse than riding on many of the roads.

A servant lights the lamps, one by one in each compartment from the inside, as the train tries to rush along. Electricity has not yet made its appearance, and when night falls you may as well go to bed, for it is impossible to read with comfort. The seats are covered with clean white linen covers, which are removed and washed when they are dirty.

The time-table is full of helpfulness. The directions as to symbols are printed in six languages. There is a key to the distances between the stations which can be used to ascertain the cost of the journey. There is a railway map that is of a comfortable size, and does not tear in pieces when it is unfolded; and there is a most ingenious diagram of each of the main lines and branches, by means of which you can see where you have to change, and how long you have to wait, if you wish to use any of the branch lines.

But the full beauty of the Finnish *Bradshaw* is not realised until you are hungry, when you look down the

page and see a little picture of a knife and fork at the places where you can get anything to eat. The train stops at these stations an appropriate length of time. If the dinner-hour be near you may get twenty minutes, and it is wonderful what can be done in twenty minutes, if certain dietary rules be disregarded. The food is spread out on a long table, with piles of plates, knives, forks and other articles. You help yourself and you can satisfy your appetite according to several tabulated schemes. By means of a printed tariff you see how much it will cost to have soup alone, or two dishes or three or the whole course. You eat as much as you choose of one dish if one dish be your choice, and when you go to pay, you are not asked how much you have eaten but how many dishes you have sampled. A full-course dinner of really excellent quality costs about two shillings. If you have coffee and cake you get one cup of coffee but the supply of cake is unlimited. A bottle of beer costs a shilling, but that includes as many sandwiches as you care to consume. If you be very thirsty and want a second bottle of beer you pay a second shilling, but this obviously conveys no advantages in the way of sandwiches.

Luggage can be sent in advance, but the railway company does not collect. The time-tables show both Helsingfors and St. Petersburg time side by side on the direct line between the two places. On the larger time-tables placed on the walls of the stations, the Russian time is in red and the Helsingfors time in black.

Some of the waiting-rooms possess a card showing the exact colours and shapes of all tickets and passes used on the line; and in quite a large number a diagram of "First Aid" forms part of the equipment.

But in a land surrounded and threaded with waterways boats have always formed important means of communication, and even to-day the traveller is unwise who does not make use of them whenever and wherever he can. A hundred years ago there were only sailing vessels or rowing boats on lake or sea. The foreign mails were taken by these among the island-strewn seas off the western coast to Åland or Stockholm; passengers made use of either private yachts, mail-boats, or so-called packet-boats. As the length of the passage depended on the winds and the tides there was not much regularity about the services.

On Sunday, the 5th of June, 1876, a date memorable in Finnish history, the first steamboat arrived at Åbo, having come from Stockholm in thirty hours. She carried twenty-four passengers and returned the same night with twenty-nine. After that there was a weekly service between the Finnish port and the Swedish capital. It was not many years before various steamship companies had connected most of the ports with one another and with the Continent, and smaller vessels were wakening the echoes in the distant lake-land.

All who have ever travelled on the boats that navigate either the lakes or the seas are unanimous as to the quality of the accommodation, the cheapness of the fares and the abundance and variety of the food.

One does not usually associate Finland with motor-cars. Even those who have learned that, despite its northern situation, it is, in the summer, a land of fruit and flowers, will find its nickname, the "Land of a Thousand Lakes," more suggestive of a motor-boat than of a motor-car. The motor-boat has, indeed, become a distinct

feature of the water-life of Finland and, either for the purpose of business or pleasure, is the goal of many desires. The myriads of pine-bordered waterways that wander in an inextricable tangle of silver ribbons across the forest-clad lake-strewn plateau of the interior, form glorious thoroughfares for the owners of motor-driven craft. There is an endless variety of route, and there are few, if any, of those tourist-ridden spots that are such an abomination in the better known lands of the Continent.

A somewhat limited acquaintance with Finnish roads had impressed me with the idea that they were about as degenerate as a road could be and still retain any title to be called by such a name. I had been violently jolted in springless carts, and cast from side to side of rutty stone-encumbered roads, and I had grave doubts as to whether Finland possessed anything in the nature of a highway that would be much superior to a cart-track through a field. Finnish friends protested that my experience was not only limited, but unfortunate, and that there were miles of roads that were of excellent character. I persisted in travelling by water until an accident led me to make my first journey along one of the more northern highways that thread the forest.

It happened in this way. I was travelling by steamer along the most easterly of the lake-systems, and, during the evening, got into conversation with one of the passengers, who had picked up a little English in America, the goal of all good Finnish emigrants. He learned the route I intended to follow and then said: "Come to my town, Nurmes; it is a fine town and there is a man there who has a motor-car—sixteen horse-power!"

I protested that a motor-car was not much of a novelty

to me, even with sixteen horse-power, but my fellow-traveller added, " You can borrow it. The man that owns it is a friend of mine, and he'll drive you the next stage of your journey for nothing."

Now from Nurmes to Strömsdal, where I expected to get a boat for Kuopio, was about ninety kilometres and I thought it was exceedingly unlikely that anyone would motor a casual visitor so far merely for courtesy. Still I knew the Finns to be so hospitable that they will do much for the visitor to their country, and it was worth going a little out of the way to get a peep at what must be one of the most northerly cars in Europe. So instead of getting off the steamer at the intermediate station at which we had proposed to disembark, we slept on board and the next morning arrived at Nurmes. By the time we awoke the man who had promised to introduce us to the owner of the car had disappeared, but, nothing daunted, we borrowed a boat and rowed across a lake to the home of the man who possessed the sixteen horse-power machine. He was courtesy itself, even when we suggested that we wished to hire his car. We had not, at that stage, developed sufficient impertinence to ask him to drive us himself the whole distance of fifty miles. He would not hear of the suggestion to pay for even the petrol used, but promised to drive us about forty kilometres on our way if we could wait till two in the afternoon. He regretted not being able to allow us the use of the car for the whole of the journey, but he had to go in another direction that very afternoon. However, he would willingly go forty kilometres out of his way if he could render us any assistance.

It was now too late to do anything else but accept his

proposal, and we waited in the house of another acquaintance that we had made on the boat. Here we were entertained with all the delicacies that the little town could provide, and we were almost sorry when the hour arrived to bid our courteous host and his charming wife adieu. The ride in the car was exciting enough in its way. The horses, everywhere, were terrified by the sight of so unusual a vehicle in this lonely part of the world, no matter how slowly we went. The driver worked hard with the hooter and gave long and noisy warnings of our approach, so that the peasants were able to get down and hold on to the heads of their restive steeds. Chickens and dogs ran deliberately from side to side of the road courting a destruction that the courtesy and skill of the chauffeur prevented them from suffering. The cows simply stood stock still in the road and refused to budge until we were right under their noses, when the smell of the petrol or the throbbing of the engine converted them into models of agility and speed. It is only under the influence of an automobile that the cows will condescend to show their powers of leaping fences and ditches.

The roads were good enough ; in places they were even excellent, though the gradients were often rather steep, and our sixteen horse-power Darracq needed a little persuasion, and once or twice a little assistance, in getting over the tops of the small hills, for the roads seemed to run straight from point to point as though gradients were of no consequence to the engineer who made, or the peasants who use these northern forest-roads. At times the roads run for sixty miles through almost unbroken forest, where the silver of the birch and the red of the pine take new tints with the passing of every cloud, and

where the throbbing of the engine and the whirr of the wheels seem but to intensify the mystery and the silence that in part constitute the attraction of the Finnish woodlands. There are many dry spots among the heather where the luncheon-basket can be despoiled of its contents, and where wild strawberries and raspberries by the thousand afford all the dessert that man could long for.

On my return to Helsingfors after a cross-country journey by road, rail and river, I was invited to go for a short motor tour in the south. Although this part of Finland is largely a coastal plain of no great elevation, it is marvellous how steep the gradients can be even in this comparatively level land. Motors are a little more common in the south than they are in the north, but the horses are not yet thoroughly accustomed to them, and great care must be taken on approaching or passing the timid creatures, for the roads are sometimes bordered by deep ditches, on the other side of which stretch miles of tree-covered land where a frightened horse is pretty sure to inflict considerable damage upon both himself and his driver.

The distances between the chief towns are not great as motor distances go, and in these towns there is always adequate if sometimes simple accommodation. Food can be obtained at the post-houses, but petrol stations and garages are not to be met with outside the larger towns. There is an excellent road-book—*Kartbok öfver Finland*—the maps in which contain a great deal of useful information. The explanation of the various symbols is given at the front of the book in six different languages, of which English is one.

Possibly the chief deterrent to a motor tour is the language difficulty, for it would take a lifetime to learn Finnish. One simple solution of the problem is to take an English-speaking Finn as a companion. I cannot say for certain, but I believe it would be an easy matter to obtain a companion who would act as interpreter, and who would be satisfied with the payment of his expenses and the pleasure of the tour, by way of recompense. The Finns are a highly cultured and hospitable people and make charming travelling companions. An application to the Finnish Tourist Society at Helsingfors would settle this question. And it must be remembered that it would be possible to see more of the people in this way than if one travelled entirely without such assistance.

The worst of a motor is that it will not travel on the lakes and rapids that constitute the distinctive charm of the "Land of a Thousand Lakes." But where the party comprises more than one person capable of undertaking the duties of chauffeur it would be possible for him to take the car from point to point to meet those who had temporarily deserted the road by land for the road by water. If the tour be made about June, when there is practically no night, the velvet surface of the unruffled lakes and the white shadows of the forest glades cannot fail to make a deep and abiding impression upon those not accustomed to the curious light effects of the Far North.

In many ways Finland is a restful country in which to tour. There are few antiquities or ruins to visit, almost no galleries or museums except in three or four of the towns, and you can surrender yourself entirely to the

charms of Nature without any of that curious unrestfulness that often impels a certain class of motorist in a foreign land, to tramp wearily through miles and miles of corridors, and up and down hundreds and hundreds of steps, that in their soul they heartily abhor.

CHAPTER XII

EDUCATION

No one who knows anything of the Finns will deny that they are the best educated nation in the world. Neither Germany nor America can claim an equality with them in this respect, and Russia, their ruler and oppressor, who is now claiming the right to conduct the educational affairs of the Grand Duchy, is almost savage and uncivilised by comparison. In May 1891 a census was taken of the children in the various districts of the country. Out of half a million children under the control of the Lutheran church only about 17,000 were in want of some form of education; in the Russian provinces, that is, those where the Greek Church holds sway, there were over 4000 out of 9000 who were illiterate. In 1860 the proportion of illiterates in the Finnish regiments was only 2, while in the Russian regiments it was 98. By the year 1910 the Russians had made up a little of their backwardness, but amongst the Lutherans only 0.6 per cent. of the population under fifteen was illiterate, while of those belonging to the Greek Church 32.1 per cent. were illiterate.

National education in some form or other has been in existence since the time of the Reformation, though for many years it included only religious instruction and the art of reading. The love of reading thus fostered has remained a prominent feature of Finnish character unto this day, and is in part responsible for the progress of the

people. There are few of the lower classes that cannot read, though there are a few more who cannot write. The earliest teachers of the infants were the sextons at the various churches. In only a few districts were special schoolmasters appointed. Still, custom enjoined that every child should receive some education, either at home or somewhere else, and this home education has played a very important part in the history of the people in the country districts. It was supplemented from time to time by the visits of the ambulatory pedagogue, who went from village to village in the district allotted to him and stayed a few weeks at each, to add something to the meagre stock of knowledge that the child had already obtained. Incomplete though such work must have been it has had an important civilising effect, no fewer than 175,000 children being at one time brought under its influence.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the schools of all kinds were under the control of the Church. There has been a severance of Church and State in this matter in later times, but the Lutheran clergy still control and, to a large extent, render compulsory some form of religious education. Under the mother or under some other teacher, the child must be taught to read. Next follows the learning of the Catechism and after that the elementary school. Every year the Lutheran pastor holds a Reading Examination which all of school age must attend, and which is accompanied by a feast in honour of the pastor and the sexton. It is largely owing to these reading examinations that it is rare to find a child above the age of ten who cannot read the Bible. For many years the only literature, the only reading books in use were the Bible, the Catechism, the Prayer-book and the

almanac, with an occasional sermon or tract. There has since been a marked increase in the number of books adapted to the needs of the agricultural and working classes, and now there is no dearth of scientific and other educational literature, both in Swedish and in Finnish. But most remarkable of all has been the immense growth in the number of newspapers issued. There surely never was such a people as this for reading the newspaper. You may go into a home where poverty has overtaken the inmates and where clothing has been reduced to rags and food is almost non-existent, and the first thing that will happen if you leave a penny on the table will be the purchase of a daily paper. It is no unusual thing for the cottagers to subscribe to buy a paper and to pass it from house to house, in cases where total possession is beyond the means of the readers.

The Church, as pointed out in the chapter on *Weddings and Funerals*, has been a powerful factor in educational progress. At its compulsory *Confirmation Schools* preparation was for the first Communion, and one condition was that the candidate should be able to read.

The modern organisation of education can be roughly outlined in the following way. There are a number of elementary or Folk Schools leading to a Higher Folk School, a kind of higher grade elementary school. There are a number of secondary schools divided into classical and modern schools, and both leading to the University. There is one University, that of Helsingfors, and over the whole system there is an administrative body corresponding to our own Board of Education, with two departments dealing respectively with elementary and secondary education.

There is no compulsory attendance, though a law was passed by the Diet in 1910 making attendance compulsory, but this has not yet been sanctioned by the Grand Duke. Education is not free, but the cost is so low that the fees do not act as any great deterrent to those in search of education.

In every parish there is a Folk School in which manual work and gymnastics form prominent features of the curriculum. The cost of erection and maintenance of these buildings in the country falls upon the parish, except in the case of those that are notoriously poor and which are assisted, upon application, by the State. Towards the erection and maintenance of similar schools in the towns the State contributes twenty-five per cent. of the expenditure. In every province there is one or more Higher School.

There are a number of special schools for higher technical education, for commerce, agriculture, forestry, navigation, art, music and for the treatment of abnormals.

The buildings used for secondary schools, for training colleges for elementary teachers, and for the majority of the special schools are erected after plans that have been drawn up by the General Architectural Council in Finland. The Folk Schools are usually built from plans made by the Government. Some of these have been obtained by the offer of prizes in public competitions. Where the school is situated near to a public park or a square these wide open spaces are used as playgrounds during the intervals between lessons.

The greatest care is bestowed upon the hygienic character of all the buildings. In the secondary schools brick is used and the schools are in two or three storeys.

If bricks are too expensive, then the upper storey may be of wood. In the case of very small schools only wood is used. In the class-rooms that face to the north, and which require special treatment in view of the severe cold of the winter, the outer wall is panelled on the inside with boards. In these rooms the prevailing tones of the decoration are warm reds, yellows and greens, while in the warmer rooms that face to the south, the colder tones are used. There are no square corners for the accumulation of dust. The windows are all double on account of the winter cold, and the tops are placed as near the roof as possible. For the same climatic reason all gymnastic halls are placed indoors. They have separate dressing-rooms, and in the newer buildings are provided with shower-baths.

The size of the classes seems rather large for schools of this type, as the maximum number is allowed to reach forty.

Overcoats are hung up in cloak-rooms or corridors, and there is not only a separate place for each class, but a separate partition for each pupil. Each of these is provided with a peg, a shelf for caps and bags, a stand for umbrella, and a pigeon-hole for the indispensable galosh. It is necessary also to provide accommodation for snowshoes and snow-sledges as well as bicycles.

The Folk Schools also have several interesting features. They are usually of three kinds, those with only female teachers, those with only male teachers, and those with teachers of both sexes. Every such school in the country has a playground and enough ground to provide gardens for teacher and pupil. The girls' desks have lids which lift up on hinges and which have pincushions underneath.

All higher schools have laboratories and zoological museums. In all schools the maps and pictures as well as the blackboards have dull surfaces; books are printed on white dull paper and the type is usually large and thick.

Mixed schools are very common; in country districts they often owe their erection to economic considerations, but in the capital, where all kinds of schools exist, they are due to the opinion of so many people that co-education is the most natural and the most efficient form of training for the young. No one seems to fear the growth of unhealthy sentiment, and a young Finnish lady who had been through such a school, remarked to me, "Well, we may fall in love when we are at school, but never with a boy in the same school as ourselves. You see, we know them too well."

The school year is divided into two terms, the autumn term from September 1 to December 20, and the spring term from January 15 to June 1. The long holiday from June to September is on account of the fact that during those months all the available labour is wanted on the farms. Girls and boys in attendance at the Secondary Schools are expected to use some of their time in the collection of wild flowers. During the first year they collect perhaps thirty varieties, the next year eighty, and the third year a hundred. These have to be carefully pressed and mounted, and the Latin name, the place where the specimen was obtained—province and village—and the habitat neatly written, with the date and the name of the collector on each specimen.

Besides the longer vacations for summer and Christmas, there are six days at Easter and one extra holiday every

month. The last Tuesday in February is a holiday for both boys and girls, and is usually devoted to picnics which are made by means of skis and skates. The customary meal on this occasion is hot milk, and buns on which a liberal allowance of almond paste has been spread. When the young merry-makers return in the evening they wind up the festivities with a carnival or masked ball.

On the last Saturday before the first Sunday in Advent is celebrated the feast of Little Christmas. A small Christmas tree is decorated and laden with comic gifts, which the children give to one another and to their teachers. This festival has been made the occasion, by unruly children, of getting a little amusement at the expense of their teachers. I know of one case where a teacher had been jilted, and where the knowledge of this fact was fairly widespread. The unfortunate gentleman was not very popular, and his gift from nearly every child in his class was a basket, a reference to the saying "He's got the basket," a phrase corresponding to our "cold shoulder." Another time the girls in one class provided their teacher with a wonderful assortment of cheap rings, because she had been seen walking about with the head-master of the mixed school in which she was employed.

Before leaving school for the Christmas holidays a school party is held, and a splendid Christmas tree is laden with sweetmeats, flags and candles. There is first an elaborate and sumptuous tea and then games and dancing. A play stage-managed by the pupils themselves is performed, and this is followed by the distribution of prizes, which are beautifully bound books in some schools and money where the pupils are poor.

May Day is a national festival. Bands begin playing early in the morning, and the streets are thronged with pleasure-seekers far into the night. Special forms of food and beverage are used to mark the special joyousness of the beginning of the summer.

In most of the schools the hours are from eight to ten in the morning and from one to three in the afternoon. In addition to this each class has to attend once a week for gymnastics from five to six. Lessons are usually nominally one hour long, but ten minutes' play is allowed between each lesson, thus reducing the length of the lesson to fifty minutes.

Finland early realised the value of manual training, and it is practised in all the Folk Schools except in those for girls, where needlework is substituted. The boys begin with work in paper and cardboard and follow this by work in wood, the exercises being those of the Slojd system. A. Palmberg, to whose monograph on the School Institutions of Finland we are indebted for most of the details in this chapter says : " Instruction in manual work is not only a counterbalance against the still-sitting work, it also tends to rouse and develop the child's natural activity. It makes the pupil respect manual labour and develops the sense of order and exactness, as well as the pupil's talent for art ; his sense of symmetry and harmonious proportions is sharpened. The children themselves practise measuring, calculating, comparing, planning and designing, and, in one word, all the different arts required in their work. They learn to be clever with the tools and the common materials. The knowledge which the pupils have got in arithmetic, geometry, drawing and natural science is applied at every suitable opportunity,

as, for instance, when explaining the physical properties of the tools and material.

"To further the great hygienic import of this instruction the pupils are always ordered to give the body the correct carriage while working." Two pictures are common in the schools; one shows a boy sitting with head upon arm and bent over a table, with the legend underneath, "Do not sit like this"; the other represents a very smart and attractive girl sitting gracefully upright; underneath is written, "Sit like this."

Home work varies in length from one to three hours, according to the class and the individual. Children frequently help each other over the telephones, one of these instruments being found in every house.

Every summer poor or weak children from the Folk Schools are sent to healthy country places to recover their health under the influence of fresh air, nourishing food and proper treatment. For this purpose the children are selected by a public Medical Officer, who weighs and measures the children before and after the holiday. The holiday camps are provided at the expense of the town, but are managed by one or two of the teachers. The average cost of each child per day, including all expenses, is about fivepence. The length of the stay varies from one week to three months.

Miss Lucina Hagman, the headmistress of a Finnish Mixed School and a Member of the Diet, contributes an interesting article on "Home and School" to Palmberg's monograph which is well worth quoting in full.

"In former times, home and school were total strangers. The reasons for this total and very bad estrangement between these two principal centres of education are to

be found—on the one hand in the formerly prevalent opinion of the school's object, on the other hand in certain social conditions.

“ The school, it was held, had no other duties towards the child than to fill its brain with a lot of knowledge. That a sound and natural development of the body should go together with the intellectual development and form a natural foundation for all education, the school never considered. One did, therefore, hardly give any attempt to the hygiene of education, either at school or at home.

“ The pedagogical development has, however, made it evident that even the school-boy's and girl's body and soul are dependent on one another, and that the school has to attend to the development of the former also. The hygienic element has, therefore, so to speak, entered the school door with a relentless claim. The school cannot any more leave the health of the pupil unattended to. And the principle of education in the homes, more and more developing in favour of the education of the body, the school and the home cannot any more avoid meeting in their exertions to reach the same goal. The respect for the individuality of the pupil which is growing more and more in the educational world, tends to the same object, as well as the fact that, if the school is to act educationally, it must take into consideration the individual possibilities of the different pupils.

“ The interests of home and school having found mutual points of contact, a co-operation, even if still incomplete, has grown up between them. The school respects the home and its interests more than before, and makes in certain cases inquiries about the opinion of the home regarding the bodily and mental abilities of the pupil.

“ A bridge between home and school was built in our country, when the girls’ school was introduced by the side of the boys’ school; previously reigning alone. The home felt more confidence in a school, where girls were educated, where the teachers were both women and men, and where, therefore, a more homelike spirit reigned than in a boys’ school. It certainly took a long time before this mutual feeling was transplanted to the boys’ schools, but even this came in time.

“ The co-operation between the home and even the boys’ school was later on influenced by the private schools, and especially by the now so common mixed schools.

“ In a school where boys and girls are educated and grow up together, where men and women act as teachers, where a man and a woman lead together, there the work is carried on in an altogether different way than in the old-fashioned separate school. The work in a mixed school is naturally more like the work at home, in which both sexes take part. Life in such a school resembles life at home, where one tries to attend to both the general and the individual wants. The beauties of family life, the mutual attentions to all its members; are transplanted to the school. The peculiar characteristics of both sexes are brought into contact with the life and work at school, exactly as they are at home, and these gain, therefore, in richness and colour.

“ Home and school in Finland admit now that they require one another, and that only by going hand in hand can they execute a successful educational work, especially as regards the health of the pupils.

“ Regarding first of all the absence from school, most schools now demand a written certificate from the home

or lodging-house, in which certificate the day and number of missed hours must be given. Only in a very small number of schools is the reason of absence also demanded, principally in the private schools, of which the greater number are mixed schools, and, if illness be the reason, the nature of this illness. By means of this co-operation between home and school the hygienic interest is raised on both sides, and the school is in a position to make up statistics on the health of the school with the help of these reports of absence. Such statistics are to be found in the annual reports of certain schools. On request made by parents or guardians, pupils in the private schools are allowed to be free from attending certain lessons for a longer or shorter time. This request should, as a rule, be based on a doctor's report.

— In case of infectious diseases among school children, a co-operation between home and school has been gained, and the home is requested by the school to report immediately to the school, when such a case occurs in the home. Thereby the school has the opportunity to disinfect everything in the school with which the scholar has come in contact : *class-room, hall, stairs, desks*, etc. By co-operation with the home it can be, when necessary, arranged that persons (teachers, comrades, etc.), who may live in the same family as the infected pupil, shall not visit the school and carry the infection with them. There is still a lot to be done as regards co-operation between school and home, as in the cases of infectious diseases both at school and home, and it must be admitted that the measures taken for this purpose in all the schools of our country are not quite sufficient, but great advances have been made,

" Home and school have not, as yet, seen the great importance of united work as regards hygienic ways of working and living for children, correct distribution of work, amusement and rest, distribution of work during the different hours of the day, a wholesome arrangement of meals, and, first and last, enough fresh air for the growing generation.

" Something that has also a great effect upon the health and work of the school children, both at home and school, is attending amusements and festivals, which often last till late at night. In the school law now in force it is decreed that children, who have not their parents in the school town, must, every time they wish to visit public places of amusement, ask permission of the headmaster or headmistress of the school. Although this statute has been made more for moral than for hygienic purposes, it attends to the latter, without doubt, also. The school can, by means of this statute, control the pupil's health, morals and life in general, if the pupil live in a lodging-house, but this control does not touch the home, which is a pity, as a number of homes allow their children, especially the girls, to amuse themselves at the cost of their health.

" In some mixed schools it has, nevertheless, been the custom that pupils, with parents in the same town, inform their headmaster when they wish to visit public amusements. As a rule, parents have willingly met this wish of the school, and thus the school has more chance of controlling the cause of the lack of study or the failure in health of the pupils.

" With a view of co-operation between home and school, chiefly in our capital, there have been arranged what might

be called Parents' Meetings, at which different questions are discussed, touching the pupils' relations to the school and the home, their learning, their state of health, pleasures, private lessons out of school and other kindred matters. The advantage of such meetings cannot be appreciated too highly, as the teachers in this way come into contact with the parents of their pupils. From time to time parents also pay a visit to the school to learn about the progress of the children. On such occasions a great deal of information, concerning the school and the home, may be gathered through discourses with the heads of the classes or teachers. On the occasion of festivals at school, parents and relations are generally present."

Poor but gifted children have been liberally assisted to get higher education. The extent to which private persons have helped in this good work is perhaps greater than in any other country in Europe. Money is lent to poor pupils to attend places of higher education, and in small towns free meals are provided for poor children *at the homes of other families* who are willing to help in this way. Food, clothes and school-books are also found for those who are eager to learn, but hindered by insufficient means.

Very searching regulations are in force as to the treatment of children who have been suffering from infectious diseases, and medical examinations about which we are still arguing have been in operation for years. During the autumn term all the children in the first class of the primary school are examined. Their complexion is noted, their state of nourishment is inquired into, and all chronic diseases and defects are labelled. A second

examination of the same children takes place the next term with the object of testing sight and hearing, and all those in need of them are advised to get spectacles. If any of the children are found to be undeveloped or intellectually feeble they are sent to a special school. A third examination occurs when the child has been at school for two years, for the purpose of revising the results of the first examination. Special attention is given to infirmities of the lungs, which seldom appear at the age of the first examination. The fourth examination takes place as a rule in the last year of school life, and is intended to ascertain the effect of school life on the health of the pupil and to enable him or her to choose a suitable profession or trade.

Instruction in hygiene is common, and at the Training Colleges for Teachers in the Folk Schools there is a well-planned course of study designed to fit them for the important office of instructing the lower orders how to take care of their homes and bodies. Temperance in the use of alcoholic liquors, or rather total abstinence, is also made much of, and regular instruction is given in all the schools upon the moral and physical evils of taking alcoholic liquors. More important still is the care taken to give to the older pupils sound and sensible knowledge upon sexual problems. The Finns have tackled this thorny question in the same bold and unconventional manner as they have treated most of the other moral and political questions that frighten or perplex the people of other lands.

We have no space in which to deal with the special schools for the deaf and dumb, for the blind, for the feeble-minded, the deformed and for juvenile criminals.

It will be sufficient to say that they are well-planned, well-controlled, and as a rule, far in advance of anything to be found in this country. We must, however, find room for a few words about one of the greatest of Finnish educationalists and an account of the University.

Uno Cygnaeus, whose centenary was celebrated on October 12, 1910, and whose house is preserved as a museum in Helsingfors, is known as the "Father of the Finnish National School," for it is to him that Finland owes much that is liberal, up-to-date and independent in her present educational system. He was born at Tavastehus and educated for a doctor. He became a clergyman and wandered about the world doing good, from the Aleutian Isles to St. Petersburg, and finally came home to organise the system that is for ever associated with his name.

When the Emperor Alexander II visited Helsingfors on his accession to the throne, he made to the Senate a proposal for the reform of the system of popular education. Various plans were thereupon laid before the Senate, and the one of Cygnaeus at once claimed attention on account of its profundity and maturity, and its comprehension of the future needs of his fellow-citizens. He laid great stress on moral influences and physical culture and a little less than usual on books. His idea was that education should open the eyes of the young to the wonders and charms of Nature, to the evolution of mankind as revealed in history, and to the love of God as revealed in His treatment of man. He appended to his report a suggestion that some one should be deputed to visit foreign countries to study the various systems then in force. He was at once chosen as the one man for such a mission, and in the

course of his inquiries he visited most of the countries of Central Europe.

In Germany he found orderliness and discipline, but a lack of the liberal spirit necessary for a free and independent race of thoughtful citizens, and he objected to the then common practice of entrusting the education of girls to men. It was in Switzerland, where the principles of Pestalozzi were then in force, that he discovered the type of national school that pleased him most. He came home to lay the results of his wanderings before the authorities and he strove hard to realize his favourite idea—the application of manual work as a formal means of education at school. The plans which he drew up were, in the main, afterwards accepted, and in his various posts as Chief Inspector of National Schools and head of the Seminary for Teachers in Folk Schools he superintended the carrying out of his fruitful and inspiring ideals.

It is characteristic of the love of the Finns for education that they made the centenary of his birth a national holiday. Fêtes were held everywhere, in every town and in the remotest school in the country, and to every child was given an illustrated pamphlet telling of the great work that had been wrought for them by this vigorous and independent thinker.

The first University was founded at Åbo by Count Per Brahe, the Governor-General on behalf of Sweden. A statue to his memory has been erected in Åbo, for the Finns never seem to forget those who have given them opportunities of learning. At the time of the foundation of the University of Åbo there was no court and no rich or powerful nobility to set false ideals as to the duties and responsibilities of mankind. Education was the first

thought in every man's mind, and so it has remained to this day in a land where the possession of mental power is valued above wealth or birth. Under these circumstances, the University exercised an influence on public opinion greater than we are able to imagine, and it has become the subject of more attention and affection on the part of the nation as a whole than is usually the case with these ancient homes of learning.

When the country separated from Sweden, the position of the University was even more important than before, for it was now more isolated and more dependent on its own resources. Nearly every national movement for the purpose of promoting national culture originated here, and its opinions were looked upon by the various political officials as being to a very large extent those of the nation, and therefore worth consulting and considering when any proposed changes were to be made. It is safe to say that neither Oxford nor Cambridge have ever held anything like so exalted a position in our own land. In recent times circumstances have changed. With the rise of constitutional methods of government and the introduction of communal autonomy the interests of the people have been discussed by their representatives and by the press, and the influence of the University is now chiefly educational and non-political.

In 1829 the town of Åbo was laid in ashes, the University buildings were destroyed, and the fruit of incessant work through several centuries was consumed in a few hours. Over 50,000 volumes and many manuscripts, some of incalculable value for a knowledge of the ancient history and literature of Finland, were lost or damaged beyond any hope of recovery. When the question arose as to

the building of a new home for the University it was deemed desirable to erect it in the new capital, and the next University rose in Helsingfors. In memory of Alexander I, the benefactor of the country, it was called the Alexander University of Finland.

Other buildings necessary for the University have gradually been constructed. Amongst these are the astronomical observatory, situated on a hill with an extensive view of land and sea; the library, architecturally pleasing within and without; anatomical, physiological and pathological laboratories; the conservatories of the Botanical Gardens, among which is a large palm-house, and many other buildings of beauty and usefulness. The funds have been obtained from extra subsidies granted by the State, from export duties on timber and from the right of receiving the revenues from vacant livings, a right now non-existent.

There are four faculties—theology, law, medicine and philosophy—and each faculty has the right of conferring degrees. Presentation Day occurs once in three years, when the professor of the faculty makes a speech suitable to the occasion and invests the recipient with a crown of laurels. Masters of Arts receive a gold ring and Doctors a silk-covered hat. This ceremony is accompanied with solemn music and the booming sound of the cannon, discharged in honour of each graduate. It is, moreover, the custom at each Presentation to choose among the young ladies of the capital, a so-called “wreath-winder” who has to superintend the making of the laurel crowns. There are dinner parties with speeches and toasts, and in the evening a ball attended by visitors from all over the land, is given by the new graduates.

There are women students as well as men. They wear a white velvet cap in summer, with a band round it on the front of which is placed a golden lyre. The two sexes attend lectures together and are on a perfect footing of equality in every respect. They possess a common meeting house, the so-called Studentshuset, built by means of voluntary subscriptions from all parts of the country, which bears over its portal the inscription, "Given by the Fatherland to its Hope." It contains a library, a music room, a restaurant and other rooms needed by the students during their stay at the University.

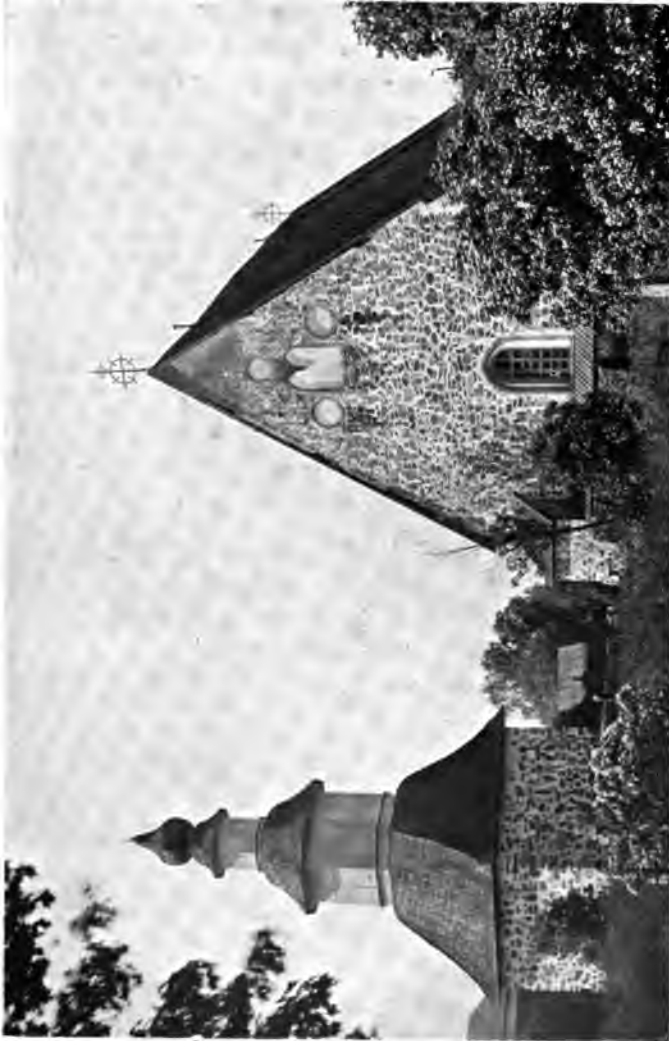
CHAPTER XIII

RELIGION—SUPERSTITIONS

IF we let ourselves travel in imagination away into the remote past we shall find ourselves amongst that primitive people, some of whose customs and beliefs we have already extracted from *Kalevala*. Their religion was that of the Asiatic tribes from whom they sprang, tempered and modified by new conditions and new aims. They had a god Ukko, the Infinite, the Eternal, and lord of all things in heaven and on the earth. His dwelling-place was in the skies and he could be reached by means of prayers addressed to him in sincerity. They had ideas of a devil and of hell, and they possessed a theory of the formation of the world which we have already related. The *Kalevala* exhibits a warm love of nature and frequently a high-toned morality.

But all this is so long ago and it is all revealed so thoroughly in the modern translation of the epic from which we have many times quoted, that we may be forgiven for not lingering over an account of the ancient religious worship of the early Finns.

When the Swedish king Eric came on his conquering expedition in the twelfth century he was accompanied by the English bishop Henry. While the monarch sought the subjection of the land by fire and sword Henry sought its conversion from heathenism to Christianity. He was not altogether successful in his mission, at least as



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TO THE
ALBANY

far as he himself was concerned, for he fell a martyr at the hands of some of those for the good of whom he was labouring. But his life was one of such purity and self-sacrifice that later ages acknowledged its charm and power, and he was adopted as the patron saint. This is a fact of some interest to us, for not only was Henry an Englishman, but the Pope, at whose request he was sent to Finland, was also an Englishman, and hence we may claim to have played a very important part in the early history of the country.

A century later, Birger Jarl, who had ascended the throne of Sweden in 1290, extended the Swedish dominions farther to the east and practically finished the Swedish conquest of the land. Following the example of Eric, he employed all the means at his disposal, both physical and moral, to utterly efface the last traces of that form of nature worship which constituted the original religion of the people. For it he substituted Roman Catholicism, and was careful to build churches everywhere in order to spread or support the new teaching.

The Roman church held sway until the Reformation, but since that epoch Finland has been constant to the episcopal form of Lutheranism. Luther's works are widely read to this day, and it is difficult to understand their popularity, for the people know little or nothing of that Roman Catholicism against which so much of his writing is directed. There are very few Roman Catholics in Finland and not many members of the Orthodox Greek church, except in the eastern parts. Lutheranism found its way from Germany to Finland via Sweden, but the liturgy, which in substance is the same for Finn and Englishman, is the one that has been handed down

from the early days of the Christian Church. As the Lutherans know nothing of apostolic succession we can scarcely refer to them as being "High Church." But their ritual, vestments, and genuflexions when celebrating Mass are of the most elaborate description. There is generally a painted reredos and the altar cloths are often very handsome. The priest's robes are of black velvet embroidered with silver, and bear on the back the all-seeing eye of God. These, however, are only worn on festivals and at the celebration of Holy Communion.

The greater part of the clergy are peasant-born, and thus the Lutheran faith has its very stronghold in the roots of the people. It is the peasant class who fill the pulpit, and as a rule the pastor and his family stand upon the very best of terms with their neighbours and are consulted by them in the most varied emergencies. The congregation elects and pays its own pastor, and in every country parish he is guaranteed a free residence and glebe lands. Being the son of a farmer he easily becomes a farmer himself and tills his own glebe lands. If the lands are very large he may let them to some one else, in order that he may devote himself more fully to the special work for which he has been chosen. His wife and children all share in the duties of the farm, and this gives a homely pleasant interest to the family. When milk, grain and firing are plentiful, the pastor is able to indulge his generous emotions and contribute to the support of his poor. The tithes are paid in kind, and it is curious to think of the announcement from the pulpit of the place and hour when the pastor will be in attendance to receive the corn and other gifts that form a part of his stipend. It must be even more curious to see him and his wife

standing at the receipt of custom and probably wondering whether the butter and the other farm products are quite up to standard. If there be something in all this that tends to raise a smile, still this mixture of the spiritual and the earthly has its good points, inasmuch as it establishes a very close relationship between priest and parishioner.

If there be a forest on the glebe it has to be carefully tended, and if the pastor requires to sell any timber for the erection or repairing of a building, he has to make a formal request to the proper authorities, who generally arrange for the felling of a certain number of trees and their sale at a public auction. The proceeds of the sale are handed over to the pastor for the purpose for which he made application.

The place of the curate of the English Church is taken by the "chaplain," but owing to the enormous extent of some of the parishes his duties are often very heavy, and he has to travel, in the course of a year, many hundreds of miles, in order to attend the various christenings, weddings and funerals. There is also an *adjunk* for the assistance of the pastor when his duties are exceptionally heavy.

The position of the wife of the clergyman, if she is a proper woman, is one of much importance in the parish, for she has the doling out of the hospitality and charity due from the clergyman, and, as charity is dispensed in kind and the tithes are also received in kind, it needs a woman of some ability to manage the receiving, weighing, storing, economising, selling and giving of all these supplies. She has to see to the spinning and weaving, look after the dairy, superintend needlework and farm-

work, preserving and gardening, and, in the country, where schools are few, she has to undertake the education of her children.

The services are very long, often two hours or more, but the Finn bears this quite patiently, even when the buildings are badly warmed and he sits shivering in the winter cold. The services remind one of those in country places in Scotland, where the preacher and the precentor share the honours of the service between them, except that in Finland it is the precentor who is sometimes regarded as being the more important, and is referred to as "holding the steer-oar of the Pastor's boat." The singing is very slow and solemn, and is accompanied by an organ when such a luxury can be afforded. Some of the organs are of an ancient pattern, and the men who blow the bellows do so by standing on them and pulling themselves up and down by means of a bar placed above their heads.

The sermons are very long, for a people that can find mental and spiritual food in these times in Luther's diatribes, are not going to be put off with "twenty minutes." They will sit for hours in unwarmed churches if necessary, listening to the pastor as he delivers his message in the beautiful language of their forefathers. Services begin very early on Sunday morning and last with intervals till three o'clock in the afternoon, after which, the religious exercise for the day being over, pleasure of an innocent type asserts its claims.

Occasionally there are two collections at the same service. Of these, one is always for ordinary church expenses while the other is for some special object, a mission, a hospital, or some other institution. If a man has no

money he may contribute labour—personal service. Thus, instead of a pew rent he may assist the pastor in the work of tilling the glebe, and, as labour is often scarce at harvest-time, this is really of more value to the pastor than a contribution in money.

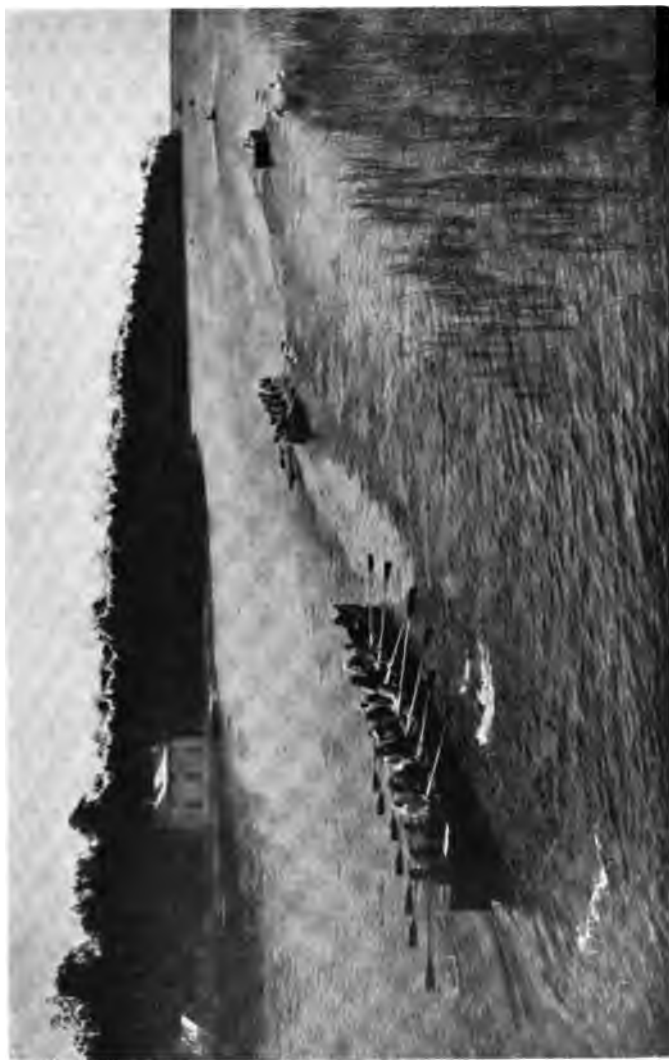
As a rule the churches are of little interest, even those that boast themselves cathedrals. But they are in every case the central point of the district in which they are situated, and the people will make many sacrifices to build them, to keep them in repair and to adorn them according to their means. A church in Finland is not considered a church unless it possesses a tower or belfry, but this tower is often detached from the main building and may remain when the building to which it originally belonged has ceased to exist. The altarpiece, which was usually the work of a journeyman painter, is gradually becoming a work of art as the taste of the nation in these matters develops. In the most ancient churches many of the walls are covered with the coats-of-arms of noble families, but everywhere, "in the new churches and the old, there hangs framed the Emperor's assurance of an unchanged government, promising the unfailing maintenance of the religion and the fundamental laws of the country."

In summer, in places remote from any ecclesiastical building, divine service is often held in the open air, and one of the earliest pictures to attract the attention of the Paris art world to the work of the Finnish painters, was Edelfelt's picture representing such an open-air service on one of the islands of the archipelago.

Here and there, where the tide of life flows slowly, may be found, near to the church door, an old building

usually circular in shape, which is a veritable relic of a far away age of strife. It is the "Weapon house," where the "King left his sword and the slave left his axe." In those days every man went to church armed, but decorously left his weapons outside the sacred building. The old *weapon house* is now used to store, during divine service, the furs required for a journey by boat or cart. The antiquities that these houses once contained are now resting in various museums, for a wise sentiment regards as sacrilege the sale of the memorials of the past.

Going to church in Finland is not always the easiest duty of the week, owing to the long distance that lies between the church and the homes of the worshippers. In winter the peasants drive across the frozen lakes in their sledges, the tinkle of the horses' bells beating a charming treble in the frosty air to the deep bass of the bells in the belfry tower. In summer the journey is made by boat. In the old days, before the advent of the steamer, the "church boat" was quite an institution, and it still lingers in those parts where the hoot of the siren has not been heard. The boats started on Saturday evening, crammed with passengers and accompanied by a regular fleet of sailing boats, rowing boats and canoes. The big boats were the property of the community, the rich giving timber and the poor labour. All who travelled in them, men and women, rich and poor, gave a hand at the oars, of which there were sometimes as many as thirty-two, arranged in sixteen pairs. Owing to their great size a third person often sat between the two rowers and gave assistance to each. Many an accident has occurred through carelessness resulting in the capsizing



[To face p. 234]

CHURCH BOATS

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of the unwieldy craft, or through the sudden springing of a leak when far from land.

When the service was over picnics followed, and there were friendly greetings in abundance between those who never met except on these occasions. Shortly before the hour of the return, the girls slipped off or tucked up their best skirts. Bodices were sometimes changed and the black silk handkerchiefs were always replaced by others of cheaper material. The more thrifty and careful even removed their boots and tied them up in the little parcel that contained the other precious oddments of the Sunday finery. No chaff from the bystanders, no cries to hurry up from those ready to depart, ever caused the slightest embarrassment to the young damsels in this open air adjustment of their attire.

The sight of the boats crossing the water in the still bright summer evenings, the sound of the hymns that rose to the accompaniment of the splash of the oars, and the sincerity of the crowd that could start for church on a Saturday evening in order to be in time on a Sunday morning, were features of Finnish life that remain for ever, a wonder to all those who have had the good fortune to behold the scene.

The traveller who in these days wishes to see something of this fervent desire to attend a church, can do so easily by taking at Nyslott the steamer that goes to Kerimäki. It is true he will go by steamer rather than by the old-fashioned "church boat," but he will probably be more comfortable, if less pleasantly entertained. The church at Kerimäki is the largest in Finland, having seating accommodation for 5500 people. It is a huge square wooden building with little or no exterior decora-

tion, and occupies a commanding position on the top of a hill in the centre of the village. The interior is painted to represent white marble walls and pillars, but the workmanship is crude and the effect unpleasant. There are two galleries one above the other extending round three sides of the church. In the centre of the open wall is a large picture illustrating the text, "Come unto Me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." From the centre of the roof hangs a great gaudy glass candelabra and on each of the pillars that support the roof are sconces of tin for candles. From the porch to the altar rails, and again from one side of the church to the other, run aisles so wide that they would almost accommodate a tramline.

The "church steamer" sails round the lake on Saturday taking aboard worshippers, some of whom are compelled by distance to embark at midday. Perhaps as early as five o'clock on the Sunday morning the steamer will give a shrill whistle to tell the inhabitants of a distant homestead of its approach. By the time it reaches the primitive pier that juts out into the velvet waters, men and women can be seen threading their way through the woods to the boat. With Bible in one hand and refreshment baskets in the other, they make their way aboard, and soon after the vessel has got once more on its way, they begin their frugal meal of rye bread and native sausage and look forward to the delights that are in store for them at Kerimäki. One little vessel, 80 feet in length, regularly collects from 150 to 200 of these ardent worshippers on her Sunday voyage. The fare charged is the uniform one of eightpence from and to any pier, whether the journey be long or short. At Kerimäki the

men sit on one side of the church and the women on the other. This is an almost invariable custom, but occasionally a woman will be found on the men's side, that is, the right side of the building. The collection is taken in bags placed at the ends of long poles. The bags are of black velvet about ten inches deep and decorated with strips of silver paper.

"For seven hundred years," says Topelius, "the Church has been warring against the superstitions of heathendom—the school for three hundred years—and yet they have not been uprooted. With the thinning of the forests superstition dies away, shunning the light of day, but it still gleams in the half-dead fires of the popular imagination. We still occasionally come across a strange mixture of Christian and Pagan ideas, but chiefly in the form of traditional legends and sayings, the original meaning of which is forgotten by the present generation. A belief in the power of *the word* still exists in exorcising, and this, with or without the assistance of persons endowed with special power, is resorted to in various diseases, for ailments and wounds. It may bring good luck in love, secure a fine crop, or the thriving of the cattle, or fine weather; it may bring luck in butter-making, in fishing, or shooting, or weaving, or the finding of hidden treasures. In these incantations the help of the Lord, the Holy Virgin and that of mysterious powers of doubtful origin are alternately invoked. Dragon-fires gleam above buried treasures; the church and the churchyard are visited by night, and search is made for the bones of the dead, and for marriage-rings, hymn-books, pieces of steel, 'thunderbolts' (ancient axes made of stone and sometimes found in the earth), serpents'

heads, spiders and frogs. Many complaints are conjured away in the bath-house. Nine different kinds of herbs are used in conjuring, and a hanging sieve prophesies. The witches of the seventeenth century, who on Easter-night rode on brooms to the Witches' Sabbath, have been succeeded by wise women, whom people come long distances to consult, and by charmers who find stolen goods. It must be noted, however, that among much foolish quackery there are some grains of good. The peasant cure of massage, for instance, so generally adopted by the physicians of to-day, derives its origin from these practices. The enlightened smile, but the ignorant are terror-stricken; and the thing most feared in northern Finland is to 'be crushed,' that is to say, to be the victim, by the instrumentality of an enemy, of an inexplicable ailment, which can bring one to death's door, if it is not made harmless by some counteracting charm.

"Witchcraft is supposed to become more common as we advance towards the north, but in Sweden all Finland is suspected of it. In Nyland the Tavast is held suspected. In Tavastland they fear the inhabitants of Österbotten, and in Österbotten the Laplanders are considered the most learned in the black art. It is said, that if a piece of steel is cast into a sudden whirlwind, a Lap woman will be seen sweeping the air with her broom.

"A belief survives in fairies and gnomes. Mountains, lakes, rivers, wells, even houses, have their gnomes or elves, and many people pretend to have seen them. Sixty years ago it was still a custom to sacrifice small coins to the gnome of the well. The mountain-ash is a sacred tree, and when burnt, it predicts luck in wooing. The frog and the swallow must not be killed—the frog

was once a man, and the swallow lies in her winter sleep at the bottom of the lake. Teeth which have been extracted are presented to the spider. If it spins its web downwards, it means bad fortune; if upwards, good luck. The snake holds parliament with its people."

On New's Year Eve young men and maidens try to take a glimpse into the hidden secrets of the future by melting tin in an iron spoon over the wood embers in the stove. When the melted tin is poured into a bucket of cold water you can, if you possess the requisite wisdom, read in the grotesque figures that are then produced the answer to your unsolved mysteries. An almond hidden in the rice-porridge will bring a wedding to the one who finds it.

And so we might go on, for the legends, the superstitions and the beliefs are endless. Superstition is buried deep in the inmost soul of the Finn, and if the ultra-modern knows nothing and believes less in the love potions that his early ancestors used to secure success in affairs of the heart, you have only to go into the backwoods, to find hundreds of his fellow-countrymen in whom the beliefs of his forefathers are still too deeply rooted to be disturbed by the progress of modern thought.

CHAPTER XIV

LITERATURE

ALTHOUGH, on the whole, there has been singularly little written about Finland from a popular standpoint, there is, as far as her language and literature are concerned, a perfect library of books and articles. But these appeal chiefly to the student and the savant, and the difficulty presented to the present writer is to choose from out the mass of matter at his disposal just that amount that will lead the reader to inquire further for himself, and that will give the traveller sufficient information to enable him to take an intelligent interest in many things that will be presented to his gaze when he arrives in the country. Two of the most prominent statues in Helsingfors are those of Runeberg the poet and Lönnrot the compiler of the *Kalevala*. The Art Gallery, which the visitor would be foolish to miss, contains many pictures whose stories are derived from the national epic, and without some knowledge of which they must lose much of their charm.

The general reader will probably not be interested in accounts of authors whose work is only accessible in Finnish, a language that he is not at all likely to study. I have, therefore, in writing this chapter, dealt only with those writers whose works are obtainable in English, or whose subjects and authors attract attention in the streets and buildings of the towns and villages of the

country, and I offer an apology to Finnish friends for all that wealth of wonderful work which is, by these terms, placed outside the limits of this book.

The story of Finnish literature is, to an eminent degree, the story of the nation, and to tell it in full would, even if space and other considerations permitted, be but to repeat much that has been said elsewhere about the development of the race. Owing to the fact that two languages have been in common use it is necessary to include in the short account we propose to give something of what has been written in Swedish as well as in Finnish. For years Swedish was the exclusive medium for the higher mental culture, and the first manifestations of an awakened national spirit appeared in a Swedish garb. With a rapidity which does not usually characterise the doings of the Finns, the regenerated national spirit demanded the adoption of its own form of speech.

A word or two first about the language. There are three great families of speech, the Semitic, to which belong the languages of the Hebrew and the Arab; the Aryan, to which belong the Indian and Persian groups and most of the European languages; and the Altaic family, which has several important branches, one of which is the Finnish, with its most closely related languages, and Lapp, which consists of four dialects. Linguists have differed in their arrangement of the Finno-Ugric branch to which Finnish belongs, and we do not propose to follow them either in their discussions or their conclusions.

Finnish, as it exists to-day, may be said to consist of a number of dialects roughly divisible into two classes, the *Karelian* and the *Tavastian*, or the *East-Finnish* and the *West-Finnish*, each containing many peculiar forms

of speech that are of purely local distribution and character. A mere glance at a Finnish grammar, with its sixteen cases for the noun and its host of grammatical complexities, gives one a humorous notion that it might have been perfected for the purpose of preventing any other nation from knowing anything about the beauties that it enshrined. The curious or the studious will get all the assistance they need in Mr. Eliot's *Finnish Grammar*, but the casual visitor will be well advised to let the matter alone, and to trust to anything rather than an imperfect knowledge of the mother-tongue for extricating him from the usual tourist's difficulties.

The history of Finnish literature is, according to Godenhjelm, divisible into six well-marked periods. It is only with the first and last of these we propose to deal, but the classification given by Godenhjelm may be of service to some other worker in this field.

1. The Earliest Period, to the introduction of Christianity and the Swedish Conquest (to 1157).

2. The Mediæval Period (1157-1542).

3. The Reformation Period, from the date of the first book printed in Finnish to that of the founding of the University (1542-1640).

4. From the date of the founding of the University to the Treaty of Nystad (1640-1721).

5. From the Treaty of Nystad to the end of Swedish Rule (1721-1809).

6. The Latest Period (from 1809 to the present day).

"The poetic impulse of the Finnish race was aroused even in primitive times, and created a national poetry, which, both as regards its national charm and great fertility, has been equalled by that of few other nations.

For it was very early that the legends and myths which were rooted in the ancient religion of the Finns sprang up and formed the material from which the old narrative poems were fashioned." ¹

This early literature comprises epic poems in which are related the marvellous exploits of the heroes of antiquity, magic songs by means of which man controlled the forces of nature, lyric poetry, folk-tales, proverbs and riddles.

Wherever the Finn went or wherever he lived he sang his early songs, but even before the advent of trains and telephones the songs were gradually becoming things of the past in many parts of the country. Still, however, in Karelen and beyond the Russian border the old rune-songs are heard in the peasants' huts, especially in the long winter evenings when the snow lies heavy on the ground.

In front of Åbo cathedral there is a statue to the memory of Henrik Gabriel Porthan, who is called the Father of Finnish History and who may be further described as the herald of the Finnish Renaissance. It was he who saw that in the study of the native language and literature there was a field wide enough to occupy the attention of the most energetic student and stimulating enough to be worthy of any ardent lover of the Fatherland. He occupied himself with history, philology, folk-lore and a host of allied subjects: ' While Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Åbo he devoted his spare time to the task of collecting, sorting and sifting the material of Finnish history. In the home of his father, a country pastor, he had learned something of the depth and richness of

¹ Godenhjelm.

that hidden life of the peasant that no one had then thought worth serious study. He wrote in Latin or Swedish, and not in Finnish, and by the aid of old manuscripts which he found at the University he dealt with the development of the national life in a way that called attention to the magnitude and charm of the subject. It was in this way that he laid the foundations of the great revival which constitutes the special glory of Finnish literary history.

Porthan died in 1804, and in 1809 there began a new era full of bright accomplishment and yet brighter promise. Finland had now become a part of the Russian Empire, and it was necessary for the Finns to consider the future and to avoid the loss of their nationality by developing an independent culture. Much energy and thought were expended in the work of propaganda, and what with disquisitions on the Finnish language and old poetry, the preparation of works in Finnish, and the arguments of men who laid great stress on the value of nationality as a factor in political and social progress, there was born that *Fennomania* to which most of what we have to say here and on Art and Music was due.

The Finnish Literary Society was the outcome of the conversations and enthusiasms of three young men all of whom have received the reward of popular recognition in their own land. These were Snellman, Runeberg and Lönnrot. Snellman, though of Finnish parentage, was born in Stockholm. He was, however, educated in Finland and devoted himself to work in the land of his parents. He held a number of educational posts, including the rectorship of a school in Kuopio, where he edited a prominent Finnish news-

paper, *The Countryman's Friend*. In many a cottage of the land his portrait will be found, and Kuopio keeps his memory green by a bronze bust on the Promenade.† It was largely due to his efforts that the Finnish language was adopted as a means of education and culture. Johan Ludvig Runeberg was another of that band of penniless students who, by means of great personal sacrifices, found it just possible to pursue their University studies. As a school-boy he had written verse after the manner of the older and more conventional poets of the country, but later he became the national singer, the composer of the National Anthem, and the author of a number of poems breathing the highest patriotic fervour.† He had developed a love for nature in his country home; he had caught the charm of the legendary verse of the peasant; and he had withal, a sunny nature that brought him love, to complete the triumph that he won over his countrymen by his intellect. He grew up on the Swedish coast of Finland and he never mastered the Finnish language, but for all this he penetrated deeply into the inmost nature of the people, and grasped with the keenest sympathy all that was characteristic in their modes of thought and custom, in their songs and tales.

While residing as a tutor with two families in the interior of the country, he learned the traditions which had gathered round the memories of the sad wars that had played such havoc in the land. The head of one of the families with whom he lived had himself seen service in the wars of 1808, and there were many others in the same neighbourhood who told him tales of the disastrous times through which they had passed. Amongst these was an old retired subaltern officer who was quartered with the

family in which Runeberg was tutor, and who occupied himself with making nets and performing simple duties of a miscellaneous character. This man is the hero of the song-cycle that has been published in English under the name of *Ensign Stål's Songs*. The adventures and stories put into the mouth of the old man must be read with due regard to that licence which is allowed to poets. Many of the personages and incidents in these songs are historically true while others are pure inventions. The songs must therefore be taken as poetry and not as history. The work is read in the poet's native land with the greatest enthusiasm. Miss Donner, who has rendered the songs into English, provides her version with an introduction from a Finnish writer, who says that "there can be no doubt that the national significance of these songs cannot be surpassed by anything that has been composed in the 'land of a thousand lakes.' Of what importance they were in awakening and keeping alive the spirit of patriotism and national feeling in the Finnish people, a foreigner can scarcely imagine. A corresponding rôle has been played by no other work of fiction in the literature of the whole world."

The poems are full of noble descriptions, sound realism, and a patriotism that is earnest but not intolerant, and it is to these virtues that they owe their place in the hearts of the Finns. Runeberg wrote only in Swedish, but his spirit was so much in sympathy with the Finnish population that even the bar of language was not able to prevent his becoming the idol of Swedish and Finnish speaking people alike.

In 1837 he went to live at Borgå, and there he spent the rest of his life. At first and for many-years he was engaged

in teaching in the school of Borgå. At his death, his house was acquired for the nation, to be preserved as he left it, and later a great statue was raised to his memory in the broad thoroughfare of the Esplanade at Helsingfors. No visitor should fail to make the little excursion to Borgå. It takes but a day and provides memories for a year. You can learn in this one trip much about the Finnish archipelago and Finnish steamers, and you will see the one really picturesque town in the country.

The beautiful entrance to the little river on which Borgå stands is spoiled with factories and mills erected in the interests of commerce and progress. The town contains between five and six thousand inhabitants, and therefore is a fairly large place for Finland. There are in the old timber houses and the narrow winding streets many subjects for the painter's brush. There are several consulates, with a most delightful air about them of never doing any business, a post-office open only from nine to one and then again from four to six, broad thoroughfares with trees in the newer part of the town, houses plentifully bedaubed with red and yellow ochre in the old part of the town, antiquated copies of Noah's ark on the river waiting for another flood, and so much to see of the kind that delights the man with eyes to see, that if the day be sunny you can wander for hours, but you must go slowly, and take it all in quietly and gradually, like breathing. The atmosphere of Borgå is not in harmony with a restless spirit.

The house where Runeberg lived is easy to find, and the attendant will see that you miss none of the treasures, but as all her explanations are given in Finnish you will perhaps be little the wiser, except that you cannot help

feeling something of the reverence and love with which she handles the relics and speaks of the departed. It is all so unlike our own custodians at home. As Runeberg lay in bed, with his head away from the light, he had a looking-glass placed so that he could see the birds feeding at the window-sill upon the crumbs that he had ordered to be there placed for them. He was a brave old man, and lost none of his cheerfulness and his clear insight as he lay for months upon his bed of sickness. You cannot get away from Runeberg at Borgå, for, as you pass along the Esplanade, you will come upon his statue in a small but prettily laid out open space; and when you cross the bridge and ascend the high sandy ridge on the other side, you will find his grave lying in just such a place as he would have wished, open to every wind that blows, now hidden under winter snows, now bathed in all the majestic glory of the nightless summer of the north.

The third of the Brotherhood, if I may so call them, was Elias Lönnrot, son of a country tailor and himself a poor country physician, who practised in the little town of Kajana in the remote interior. As he moved about amongst his peasant patients he became acquainted with their wondrous stores of legends, proverbs and other forms of popular verse. He sat by the fireside of the aged, rowed on the lakes with the boatmen and watched the flocks with the shepherds. He journeyed into the most remote parts of the country, through wild fens, marshes, forests and plains of ice. He travelled by canoe, on horseback, in reindeer-sledges and on foot. No toil was too severe for him to undertake if he could but hear another ancient rune to add to his collection, if he could but gather

from the lips of a peasant another fragment of the buried treasure of Finnish literature.

All this mass of verse he sorted and classified and out of it he wove *Kalevala*—the Land of Heroes. He laid under contribution traditional poetry of every species and to the ground-work of the epic, which was much the same in all parts of the country, he added such narrative poems as may justly be termed heroic, many subsidiary narratives, nuptial odes, incantations and fragments of lyrics. It is a synthesis of traditional poetry of striking interest. One often reads an ancient classic as a duty. There is not a page of *Kalevala* that is not pleasing. The poem in its complete form gives a detailed picture not only of the religious and moral ideals of an early people, but also of their domestic and outdoor life and of the northern regions in which they lived. It contains fifty songs or runes, 22,800 lines. The metre, already familiar to the reader from quotations, contains four trochaic feet. It is the metre of *Hiawatha*, or rather we ought to put the matter the other way about, for it was from a German translation of this poem that Longfellow got his idea of the metre used in his well-known poem. This metre is common to all forms of Finnish verse, lyric, epic and magic.

The method of singing and accompanying the runes is given in the next chapter.

The following account of *Kalevala* is the work of the Finnish writer, E. Aspelin.

The epic describes first, the creation of the world and the birth of Väinämöinen, the greatest hero, wizard and singer; the origin of the vegetable and animal world on

the new earth, and the hero's first attempt at farming. After the tragic episode about the youthful virgin Aino—who, driven to despair by the courtship of the aged Väinämöinen, which is favoured by her people, finds her death in the waves—follows the tale of the wooing expeditions of the three Kalevala heroes to Pohjola, the Northland, and their adventures there. Väinämöinen first tries his luck, but wounds himself while performing his appointed tasks. In his stead, Ilmarinen accomplishes the forging of the Sampo, a lucky magic machine, which Louhi, the mistress of Pohjola, claims as a ransom for the hand of her beautiful daughter; however, this time he has to return home without it. The wooing expedition of the third hero, Lemminkäinen, also turns out unfortunately, for when trying to shoot a swan on the river in Tüonela (Hades), he is treacherously killed, and only by means of his mother's love and the healing plants from the stores of the Creator can he be called back to life. Meanwhile, Väinämöinen and Ilmarinen have not given up hope, but set out for Pohjola again, where the latter at last obtains the hand of the scornful beauty, having performed three more difficult tasks. Then a grand wedding is celebrated at Pohjola, to the joys of which Väinämöinen good-naturedly contributes by his singing. Immediately after the wedding, Lemminkäinen arrives at Pohjola, where, in great wrath at not having been invited, he begins a quarrel and kills the master of the house. The fear of the consequences of his deed drives him forth to long-continued wanderings, till, returning home at last, he finds his house burned by the enemy, and his mother hidden in the wilderness. His war expedition to Pohjola, where he vows to take revenge, is interrupted by the frost. After a new and



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THE STORY OF VÄINÄMÖINEN AND AINO (AFTER GALLÉN)

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deeply tragical episode, in which the misfortunes of the ill-fated Kullervo are related, the song tells us of an interminable feud between Kalevala and Pohjola, for now Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen and Lemminkäinen have determined to go to war with the Northland, to carry off the Sampo, the charmed mill, with the assistance of which a life of luxury, free from care, may be lived. During the journey Väinämöinen constructs out of the jawbone of a pike the first *kantele*, and makes it ring with such lovely music that all nature is charmed, people are moved to tears, and the very gods delight in it. The heroes possess themselves of the Sampo, but being attacked by the pursuing Louhi, the Sampo falls into the sea, and is crushed to pieces, the largest of which sink to the bottom, while only bits of the wreck are carried by winds and waves to the shores of Kalevala, where they become the cause of the everlasting happiness of the land. By his wisdom and power, Väinämöinen succeeds in frustrating all the plots of the enemy against the welfare of the country—among other things he compels Louhi to release the sun and the moon, which she had locked up in a copper mountain—and so peace and joy at last prevail in Kalevala. In the last song of the poem, the conflict between the Christian faiths and the pagan beliefs of the people is reflected. A virgin, Marjatta by name, gives birth to a son, after having eaten a berry. Väinämöinen passes sentence of death upon him, but the child is baptized and made King of Karelen, and the hero sails away in great wrath, leaving behind, however, his *kantele* and his songs to the everlasting joy of Finland.

The subject of the poem is centred in the forging of the Sampo and the bringing it to Kalevala. All the

expeditions to Pohjola, whether for the purpose of wooing the beautiful maiden or for that of setting the sun and moon free from the copper mountain, have been originally undertaken from the same motive as the ultimate war of conquest. Thus we see produced and developed in these epic runes, what the legend in prose tells us of an enormously strong hero, who, facing deadly perils, finds his way to a hostile country, to bring home with him nameless spoil and a maiden of wondrous beauty. The central point of the *Kalevala*, which no doubt is of a mythical character and common to the national poetry of many nations, has not, however, in every respect undergone a uniform development, inasmuch as the argument, the capture of the Sampo, is narrated in a comparatively more summary way than various minor details and episodes. From this it follows that from an æsthetic point of view essential objections may be made to the poem as an artistic whole. But all such objections lose importance when attention is called to the purely poetic merits of the runes, and especially to the thorough unity they possess by the independently Finnish treatment of the subject. Whatever foreign mythical elements comparative research may have succeeded, or may still succeed in showing in the *Kalevala*, it must be admitted that the rune-singing people has made all the borrowed elements its own, and has given to the whole the stamp of its spirit.

From a poetical point of view, the first thing to be noted is that, on the whole, the tale proceeds with the intuitiveness and placid clearness characteristic of the ingenuous national epic. There is nothing affected in it, nothing reflective, but, on the contrary, many passages in which the nature of the occurrence described raises the rune to

sublime energy of expression; for instance, in the lines describing the singing of Väinämöinen—¹

“ Väinämöinen's song is mighty,
Shakes the earth and swells the water,
Copper mountains shake and quiver,
Solid rocks are wildly roaring,
And the cliffs in pieces breaking,
On the strand the stones are bursting.”

Thus the Finnish epic rivals, in intuitiveness and power, the choicest in the world, but compared with the songs of Homer, the description of the course of events is not unfrequently meagre and poor in detail—which, of course, does not hinder the *Kalevala*, taken as a whole, from giving as comprehensive a picture of the life and peculiarities of the people as the Greek epic. Only with regard to the personages of the poem it has been justly remarked that the Finnish muse not only rivals but excels the Greek. In this respect the Homeric poem is rather poor, for most of the Greek heroes appear rather typical characters with one predominant quality, whereas the Finnish heroes stand forth almost like distinct individuals, so many-sided is their delineation.

Some other features of the poem are in close connection with the national character. The poem very rarely enlarges upon the description of battles and bloody deeds, while, on the other hand, we often find in it passages of the most intense feeling. Thus lyric and idyllic poetry find a remarkable place in the *Kalevala*, and stamp their mark on whole episodes, such as the Aino cycle and the Wedding Songs. Among other things, maternal love, in

¹ The translations given in this chapter are those in *Finland in the Nineteenth Century*.

many passages, finds expression in lines of incomparable beauty. As an illustration of the latter, we give here the answer Kullervo's mother makes to her son, when, disowned by the rest of his own people, he at last asks her whether she will bemoan his death when the report of it reaches her—

“ Not a mother's mind thou knowest,
Not the heart of thine own mother.
Bitterly I shall bemoan thee,
When my darling's death they'll tell me :
' He has left his kin for ever,
Left the ranks of his own people.'
Floods of tears I shall be weeping,
On the floor, great waves of water ;
In the shed I shall be weeping,
Bowed with grieving in the cow-house ;
And my tears will freeze the snow-drift.
They will melt the ice of winter,
Make the grass grow up in beauty,
Bubbling brooks the grass inundate.
When I'll have no heart for weeping,
Dare not venture loud lamenting,
Sorrow in the sight of people,
Secret tears I'll shed when bathing,
Pour my sorrow in the bath-house,
With my tears I'll flood the flooring.”

We may assert that in the *Kalevala* home-life is on the whole described best and most beautifully. This is the case particularly in the Wedding Songs, which abound in simple and delicate features revealing the heart of the young bride, who, full of sadness, leaves the paternal roof; the heart of the mother, who sees the object of her unwearied care, her never-dying love, going to meet an unknown future; and finally, the hearts of kinsfolk and friends, who are present on the occasion, giving the advice of experience to bride and bridegroom.

As mentioned above, the Finnish song does not delight in battle and the shedding of blood, and connected with this fact is a circumstance which constitutes one of its most characteristic peculiarities. The Finnish heroes perform their great deeds more frequently by the power of the word, than with their swords. According to the ancient popular idea, a wise man, that is, the possessor of *the word of origin*, had power over all things. In this kind of wisdom Väinämöinen is most proficient. The course of the narrative, therefore, is often interrupted by magic songs, by means of which a necessary thing is created or an obstacle removed. It must, however, be admitted that in this respect we sometimes meet with great inconsistency. Thus, for instance, we once beheld Väinämöinen removing Ilmarinen suddenly to Pohjola by means of his magic singing, but, shortly before, he has been obliged to ask Louhi for a horse and sledge to return home. Further, what would have been more natural than for Väinämöinen to create the Sampo by the power of his word? And yet the wonderful mill is forged by Ilmarinen, who makes use of common tools. This sorcery, which is a remnant of a more ancient stage of culture, counteracts and annihilates the heroic element. However, the heroes use their swords when necessary, and then show both courage and daring boldness. These magic songs, on the other hand, take the place, in some measure, of the immediate interference of the gods of the Homeric Songs with the course of events; but needless to say, this is, from an æsthetic point of view, a poor substitute compared with the mythology of the Greeks. An equally weak point of the *Kalevala* is the fact that here and there, after the fashion of the East, imagination disturbs the force of reality

and introduces into the poem fantastic beings, such as a little man rising out of the sea who suddenly changes himself into a giant. These are, so to speak, unrevised natural myths. We must not, however, forget that even Odysseus, in his rambles, meets with wonderfully mythical figures, though more limited and occupying less space.

To the characteristics of genuine and natural poetry there belongs the close connection in which it places man and nature. In this respect the *Kalevala* leaves nothing to be desired. With few exceptions the metaphors are taken from uncultivated nature, and in the songs the northern scenery appears as distinct, as true to life, as it can appear only to the imaginations of a primitive people. It is lifelike, not only because everything is rightly seen and reflected, and wood, lake, and air are peopled with their respective inhabitants, but because they are crowded with innumerable spirits, and the very objects of nature obtain feeling and the power of speaking. Nature sympathises with man in his sorrow and joy, and its sympathy sometimes contributes greatly to the elevation of the poetic feeling. Thus it is said of the place where Kullervo committed his most horrible crime of seducing his own sister and then sought death—

“ And the verdant lea lamented,
Through the grove there rang a wailing,
All the little herbs were grieving,
Tears were shed by heather-blossoms,
When seduced was here the virgin,
When the mother's fruit was ruined ;
Then the grass grew up no longer,
And the heather had no blossoms,
Sprouting blades sprang up no longer,
In the place of evil boding.”

Some few remarks on the more important characters of the poem will not here be out of place.

Väinämöinen is the chief figure, and with regard to the leading features of his character, he is the ideal hero of the Finnish people. Deep wisdom and the capacity for singing are his chief characteristics; his attitude is remarkable for calm gravity. That he is sometimes allowed to lament and shed tears, like other men, for a comparatively unimportant reason, is not to be considered a proof of unmanliness. Weeping is the natural human expression for sadness and excited feelings, and the ancient Finns did not consider it undignified in a man. Sometimes, when it oversteps all probability (for instance, when *Väinämöinen* is driven by wind and weather to *Pohjola*, or when the mothers of *Aino* and *Kullervo* are grieving), the exaggeration is nothing but a simple symbolical expression for depth of feeling. On the other hand, laughter was beneath the dignity of a man. It was considered a sign of frivolity or folly, and the constant epithet for *Väinämöinen* is, therefore, *the serious old one*. With regard to this characteristic feature, which depends on the general conditions of nature and life, we may remind the reader of the fact that to the ancient Scandinavians and Teutons tears, but not laughter, seemed to be undignified in a man, while the heroes of Homer are of no conventional opinion either way, but are truly human as they both laugh and cry. During the war with *Pohjola*, *Väinämöinen* takes the lead, and no one surpasses him in power, courage and resolution. The reverence shown him in the song does not, however, hinder a comic light from falling upon the wise man, when he presents himself in the capacity of suitor to young maidens. Yet this

takes place only during times of peace; when the weal of Kalevala is at stake he does not allow himself to be fascinated by feminine charms. The most sublime picture of him is, when, like another Orpheus, he charms heaven and earth with his music.

Ilmarinen, the smith, is the man of everyday work. His skill is far renowned and most wonderful, though while at his work he never sings. Otherwise, he is prosaic and wanting in imagination, not fond of anything novel, nor ready to take the initiative, but persevering in what he has once begun. When we add that he is honest and unsuspecting and has a kind heart, we have drawn a picture which characterises many a Finnish peasant of the present day.

The third of the great heroes, the jovial, light-hearted *Lemminkäinen*, has little in common with the first two, but nevertheless represents a side, which is not altogether rare, of the Finnish national character. Playing with swords and playing with love are his passions; he is equally greedy of both, and is constantly seen on long expeditions, seeking for one or the other. His provoking audacity always leads him into quarrels, and with his handsome and stately appearance he charms the fair maidens. But in spite of all this he has a very tender heart; he is deeply attached to his mother, though pretty often he calls down sorrow on the head of his dearly beloved parent.

Besides this trio of commanding figures in the poem we meet with a fourth hero, the gloomy *Kullervo*. The episode in six runes, which tells the tale of his life, forms a complete whole of almost dramatic perfection and of great poetical beauty. The tragic fate of the grandly

developed hero depends on the fact of his being born an avenger. From this it follows that he cannot fill a place in daily life without bringing about some disaster. He at last performs the task of his life, but weighed down by the burden of it, he commits a crime for which he seeks atonement in death.

Of the female characters of the *Kalevala*, none but *Louhi*, the mistress of Pohjola, can rival, in fulness of delineation, the great heroes. She seems guided by a ruthless desire for power and wealth when she offers her daughter as a prize to the man who shall forge the Sampo, whereas, having gained her aim, only force of circumstances can make her fulfil her promise. At the wedding, she manifests great hospitality to her guests and tender love of her daughter, but Lemminkäinen having killed her husband, she changes into an amazon-like queen, who revenges the injury with war and plunder.

When at last the *Kalevala* heroes rob her of the Sampo, the cause of Pohjola's prosperity, Louhi becomes a blood-thirsty tigress, whose fiendish hatred reminds us of Krimhil in the *Nibelungen*, though her schemes are not crowned with the same success as those of the Teutonic heroine.

The rest of the female characters are less fully described. *The Maiden of Pohjola* is the happy daughter in a wealthy home, who can freely dispose of her hand and her heart. She knows her worth and beauty, and is proud of them. With cleverness and much ready wit, though not without coquetry, she dismisses her suitors. At last she chooses Ilmarinen as her husband, on account of his clear forehead and imposing figure, taking no heed of her mother's praise of Väinämöinen's wisdom and wealth. In keen contrast

to her stands *Aino*, the unfortunate young maiden, the chief personage in one episode of the poem, which forms a countertype to the Kullervo legend. Hers is a tragic fate like his, yet she does not go down while performing a task in practical life, but because she wishes to defend woman's right of disposing of her heart.¹

We have devoted considerable space to *Kalevala* for several reasons. It is the explanation of much that one sees and hears in Finland. Its composition is the work of the earliest of the national poets and its presentation to the world is the work of one of the latest and most devoted. It is easily accessible in English, and, apart from all these reasons, there is the fact that Max Müller and others have awarded it a place in the literature of the world side by side with the Homeric poems, the *Nibelungen* and the other epics of world-wide importance.

The most noticeable feature of later Finnish literature is the development of the novel, but here again we are met with the difficulty that the novels are only to be read in the native language. The chief of the modern novelists is Juhain Aho, and fortunately a few of his short stories are obtainable in English.² Aho was the son of a parish priest and it was amongst his father's parishioners that he gained that intimate insight into the ways of the

¹ The best and only available English translation is by W. Kirby, and is published in Dent's *Everyman Library*.

² *Squire Hellman*, etc. Translated by Nisbet Bain. Fisher Unwin. Mr. Bain's introduction contains a good account of the Finnish novel. Madame Malmberg says that the word "fortunately" in the sentence above should be rather "unfortunately," as the few stories published are neither typical of Aho nor characteristic of the country. The author himself would much have preferred another selection to have been made.

country-side that find such delightful expression in some of his stories. He is exact in detail, full of a genuine and deep humour, and possesses a vivid imagination. Traces of French and Swedish influence are perceptible in his work, but the writer has powers far too independent and original to need the inspiration of foreign example.

In 1890 Aho went to Paris at the expense of the State, and came back with stories of such a realistic type that, while the devotees of this form of literary art were unsparing of their praise of the author's ideals and aims, others declaimed violently against his descent into the pit and complained that he had repaid the generosity of the land which had sent him abroad by bringing back nothing but a worthless heap of rubbish. Two of the stories about which so much clamour arose, *Pioneers* and *Loyal*, are presented in the English translation already referred to, so that the English reader can form his own opinion.

Finnish drama, again, is far too local to detain us here, but in Kuopio there is a street called Minna Canth Street, and Minna Canth is the name of a woman who has written a number of pessimistic dramas dealing with feminine questions that have won her quite a large measure of fame in her own land. Her life-story is not without interest, for, while she was astonishing Finland with the products of her imagination she was keeping a tiny drapery shop in Kuopio as a means of earning bread for her large family. When her plays brought her fame and better days she still, with that independence which is so marked in these northern people, served behind her little counter, without feeling that there was anything derogatory in being at one and the same time both draper and

dramatist. She took the keenest interest in business details, and during the long time that she lay ill in bed insisted on superintending the purchases of stock and controlling the expenditure. On one occasion a German commercial traveller timidly requested that she would show him her books. With the greatest pride she produced her ledgers and cash-books—models of excellent book-keeping. Her visitor had meant her dramas; she had not once thought of them.

CHAPTER XV

MUSIC

As music expresses the feelings of the human heart, and as these feelings are much the same throughout the world, it might be reasoned that there should be some similarity between the national music of the various parts of the globe. This we know not to be the case, the disturbing factor of national temperament playing a most important part in determining the character of the mode of expression of the elemental and common human emotions. It will be found on examination, that the distinctive character of popular music of a truly national character is largely a question of climate and geographical situation. These affect the history of the people and mainly determine their customs and occupations, and hence are responsible for just those features which make it possible to identify various folk-songs as Norwegian, Spanish or Russian. Now Finland is a land of poetry and song of a meditative and often a melancholy type. It expresses the result of the influence of the wide and lonely forests, the placid expanses of silver water and the fierce wrestling with the soil for subsistence, upon the emotions of the heart. The mood of the Finnish folk-song is not merely melancholy; it is despondent. "The national cast of mind, influenced by external circumstances, has given the Finnish song this character, and from the beginning of Time, joy and sorrow have

entered into the life of the Finnish people in about the same proportion as warmth and cold in the bleak climate."

As in Finnish literature, so with music, the only facts or people that need concern us here are those connected with the primitive people amongst whom the rune-songs were born, and with those influenced by the Finnish Renaissance. As already pointed out, the singer was an important personage in the days to which the legends relate. The making of songs was a part of their existence, and of the three great heroes, it is Väinämöinen, the Finnish Orpheus, who is accepted as the hero of the race.

During the expedition to Pohjola to capture the Sampo the warriors came to a waterfall beneath which the boat in which they were travelling stuck fast on the back of a huge pike. The pike was killed and the front part taken into the boat, where it was cooked and eaten. When nothing was left but the fishbones, the primæval singer asked if it would not be possible to make from them something useful, to which Ilmarinen replied that, as bones were useless things at any time, nothing could be made from them. Väinämöinen, however—

✕ +
" Answered in the words which follow ;
' Yet a harp might be constructed
Even of the bones of fishes,
If there were a skilful workman,
Who could from the bones construct it.'
And no craftsman there was present,
And there was no skilful workman
Who could make a harp of fishbones;
Väinämöinen, old and steadfast,
Then began the harp to fashion,
And himself the work accomplished,
And he made a harp of pikebones,

Fit to give unending pleasure.
Out of what did he construct it ?
Chiefly of the great pike's jawbones,
Whence obtained he pegs to suit it ?
Of the teeth of pike he made them ;
Out of what were harpstrings fashioned ?
From the hairs of Hiisi's gelding."

Then everybody came forward to try his skill at playing the new instrument. Boys and girls, young men and maidens, all attempted to draw music from it, but to no purpose. To Pohjola then did the musician take his precious harp or *kantele*, and people of every age and station were induced to come forth and seek for music in the fishbone harp.

" But no cheerful note came from it,
And they played no music on it,
For the strings were all entangled,
And the horsehair whined most sadly,
And the notes were all discordant,
And the music all was jarring."

There was an old blind man in the corner who was very much disturbed by the discordant tones that were produced by the amateurs, and he vented his displeasure in the following humorous exhortation—

" Leave it off, and stop your playing,
Cut it short and finish quickly,
For the noise my ears is bursting ;
Through my head the noise is echoing,
And through all my hair I feel it.
For a week you've made me sleepless."

Then the harp of its own accord informed the dismayed performers that it would only play for the musician who had constructed it, whereupon it was handed over to

Väinämöinen, and he, having "washed his thumbs," sat down to play and to sing.

As the sweet notes flowed forth all the creatures of the forest came to rejoice and to wonder. Squirrels leaped from the branches, ermines laid themselves down by the fences, deer sprang forward over the plains, and even the lynxes shared the pleasure. Wolves and bears sat side by side against the gateway; fences and gates fell down as the animals of the wilds came trooping in to listen to the wonders that Väinämöinen was pouring forth to his mighty audience. The birds of the air forgot that they too were born for singing, and with all swift speed came flying. Spirits seated themselves athwart the rainbow and the clouds; fishes hastened to the shores, and the king of the billows—

"Mounted to the water's surface,
Climbed upon a water-lily,

in order to listen to music which he owned was such as he had never heard in the course of all his lifetime—

"Then the aged Väinämöinen,
Played one day, and played a second.
There was none among the heroes,
None among the men so mighty,
None among the men or women,
None of those whose hair is plaited,
Whom he did not move to weeping,
And whose hearts remained unmelted.
Wept the young and wept the aged,
All the married men were weeping,
Likewise all the married women,
And the half-grown boys were weeping,
All the boys, and all the maidens,
Likewise all the little children,
When they heard the tones so wondrous,
And the noble sage's music."

As for the minstrel's own tears, they were larger than cranberries, larger than peas, rounder than the eggs of the grouse, and larger than the heads of the swallows. They rolled down into the water and lost themselves in the wide expanse of the shimmering lake-world. At this the minstrel was much distressed, and appealed for some one to bring back his tears. The raven tried and failed, but at last the task was successfully undertaken by the blue duck—

" In the lake she found the tear-drops,
And to Väinö's hands she brought them,
But they were transformed already,
Suffered beauteous transformation.
Into pearls were they developed,
Like the blue pearls of the mussel,
Fit for every king's adornment,
To the great a lifelong pleasure."

This, of course, is a myth, and yet it tells in a very striking manner the effect of music upon a primitive people. And this effect is still producible by the same means. I have seen a Finn almost moved to tears by the singing of a simple ballad, and if further evidence were wanted of the responsiveness of the people to the sound of singing and of other forms of music, we would call the attention of the reader to the following account given by the Italian traveller, Acerbi, in his description of his visit to the country in the year 1798. He had made the acquaintance of a few musical friends at Uleåborg, and he says: " During the time of our stay, Uleåborg had a concert every evening, open to every one that chose to attend. Our audience increased in number to such a degree that we were obliged to hire an apartment larger than any room in our house; and our quartette was

constantly honoured by a numerous circle of ladies, and almost all the gentlemen of the town. It is impossible for me to convey an adequate idea of the impression our music made upon our hearers. In order to make a trial of their sensibility, and the effect of music on their passions, we composed on purpose a few pieces of an easy harmony, the movement of whose modulations was natural and intelligible even to persons unaccustomed to the artificial refinements of music. We studied to alternate the movements of grand effect, passing from the highest *forte* to the lowest *piano* and *vice versa*, by transitions of surprise. We presently saw the tears trickle from the eyes of our feeling audience. As we realised the fabulous times of Greece, our spectators presented a most interesting picture, worthy of the pencil of the most celebrated painter. The eyes of all our hearers were turned upon us; some seemed to follow with every feature of the face, the movements of the melody: we could read in the physiognomy of the Finlanders the character of the music we had played; every look became serious at forced and strong modulations, while soft and melodious passages seemed to disperse the cloud, and their countenances resumed their tranquillity. It was curious to observe the different effects produced by the music on persons of different constitutions. One, for example, remained during the whole of a sonata fixed and steadfast, his mouth open, his eyes staring, without moving his eyelids, and apparently struck with stupid astonishment; another, on the contrary, seemed to follow every step of the melody with his whole body, and appeared to suffer a sort of musical convulsion; but the moment we began to

play their *runo*, every eye was drowned in tears, and the emotion was general."

A Finnish saying has it, that "Sorrow is the source of singing," and in the *Kantelatar*, another collection of runes and songs, it is recorded that the tale of Väinämöinen fashioning the harp out of the pike's bones is false, for—

"The *Kantele* of care is carved.
Formed of saddening sorrows only;
Of hard times its arch is fashioned
And its wood of evil chances.
All the strings of sorrows twisted,
All the screws of adverse fortunes;
Therefore *Kantele* can never
Ring with gay and giddy music,
Hence this harp lacks happy ditties,
Cannot sound in cheerful measures,
As it is of care constructed,
Formed of saddening sorrows only."

The old-fashioned *Kantele* is not now met with except in museums, and in very remote parts of the country. It was a kind of cithern played with the fingers, and when played either placed upon a table or across the knees. It possessed five strings which were at first of horse-hair, and afterwards of wire. The number of strings was gradually increased, until now it may possess from sixteen to thirty-three. It was originally formed from a thick plank of birch-wood, hollowed out on one side and provided with five pegs, by means of which the strings were stretched. The body was not closed in, and the sounding-board was formed by the table on which the instrument was placed.

According to Comparetti, the Italian author of *The*

Traditional Poetry of the Finns, it was "an ancient custom for the runes to be sung by two men, of whom one is the first or chief, he who precedes, the *precentor*, in fact, the principal singer; the other is the assistant, the accompanist, the repeater, or, still better, is he who twists the thread, the cord of the song as it is gradually formed, developed by the other. Seated side by side or opposite to each other, so near as to touch knee against knee, each holds the other by the hands, and swaying lightly they sing together in the following manner: the first begins by singing about half a line alone; at the third foot the other comes in, and after singing with him the last two or three syllables, repeats the whole line while the first is silent. Thus they go on from line to line, continuing the song with earnestness and gravity, intent on their work, while their hearers throng around them listening with the most lively attention. The second singer, when he repeats the line, generally introduces some term of approbation after the first foot, if this falls at the end of a word. Let us suppose that the line given out by the first singer is—

“‘The strong, the old Väinämöinen.’

Then the second, after singing the last syllable together with the first, sings it through alone, saying—

“‘The strong (say), the old Väinämöinen.’

It is a way of singing that appears suggested by the conservative spirit of the tradition, which is better assured by the agreement of two memories. As a matter of fact, however, the second simply follows and repeats the first; he does not correct him, does not vary, adds nothing;

only, by repeating each verse, he gives time to the first to remember what follows, and even to improvise, if his memory fails him. Thus opportunity is afforded for that variation in the rune which is so characteristic. The difficulty to be overcome by the second, lies in knowing or guessing in time the end of the line that he is to sing with the first, especially if the line is improvised; there are some less ready who are reduced to coming in on the last syllable. Another effect of this way of singing is to cause the narration to proceed much more slowly than it would seem to do to a reader. If we remember that every verse is sung twice over, if we take into consideration the use of parallelism which follows each line by at least one other, repeating the same thing in different words, we can easily imagine the slowness with which the contents of the rune are conveyed to the audience."

The development of music as an art in the modern sense, dates back to about the close of the last century. Until 1835 music as a fine art had been neglected in Finland. The foundations of the music of to-day were laid by Frederic Pacius, a German, a pupil of Spohr. He was called to Finland to be the first Professor of Music in the University of Helsingfors, and though his music was German in sentiment and construction, yet he gave to the land the music of the *National Anthem*, and a singularly solemn and beautiful song, *Suomi's Song*, both of which breathe an intense love of the Fatherland and a bright hope for the future. For years Finnish music was under the influence of France, Germany and Italy, and little or nothing appeared that can in any way be described as Finnish.

The tendency to introduce national colour into the art

of music is noticeable in the work of Armas Järnefelt, who was born only in 1869. He composed several suites and symphonic poems to which musical critics have awarded high praise on account of their richness, the originality of their orchestration and their lyric beauty.

Another man who has done much to develop the art is Kajanus. He founded a Philharmonic Orchestra, and so introduced to the notice of the younger generation much of the best foreign work of modern times, while he has written two symphonic poems based on episodes in the *Kalevala*, which in some respects are the precursors of the work of his better-known contemporary, Sibelius. One of the most popular writers of modern songs of a distinctly Finnish character is Oscar Merikanto, whose delightful lullaby *Pai, Pai, Paitaressu*, only needs to be presented to us in words which we can sing and understand to become a great concert favourite.

But the most prominent composer, the man on whom young Finland has her hope set, is Jean Sibelius, born in 1865 in Tavastehus. He, too, is a young man, and one of the most wonderful and attractive features of modern Finnish art, in all its forms, is that it is mostly the work of men, few of whom are yet fifty years of age. In music, literature, painting and sculpture, Finland has, in the last twenty or thirty years, produced a mass of work deserving of wider knowledge, and only awaiting that wider knowledge to be assured of a world-wide recognition.

Sibelius began life as a law student, but soon relinquished the dry and dusty channels of the law for the more pleasant vales of song. He received his education abroad, in Vienna under Goldmark and in Berlin under

Becker. The Government, with a wisdom that is not usually shown by administrative bodies, has given him a pension at an early age, that he may devote his life to his art, free from the financial worries that hamper the musical genius of other lands. It is owing to this fact that he has accomplished an amount of work quite surprising for a man of his age. Over fifty important works have already appeared from his pen, and most of these are fairly well known in Germany, where they have excited the usual amount of controversy that accompanies the presentation of anything decisively new and original in art. In England the only popular works of Sibelius are the symphonic poem *Finlandia* and the *Valse Triste*.

A curious thing about the development of Sibelius's art, is that he set out by defying all the accepted conventionalities as he pleased, making for himself rules and regulations, and disregarding, wherever it suited him, the directions of schools and professors. Then, when his admirers had managed to convince themselves and others that this early work was the only music of the present day worth listening to, the composer, with childlike disregard of friend and foe, began to settle down to traditional ways, and to accept the very regulations that he had at an earlier stage treated with considerable freedom and independence. At the same time, it can never be said that he has become conventional in the meaner and more contemptible sense of the word. If he shows signs of expressing himself more in accordance with the accepted rules of his art, he shows no sign that his originality of thought and motive are at all likely to be swamped by his so doing.

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Miss Rosa Newmarch, in her admirable monograph,¹ *Sibelius, A Finnish Composer*, points out that Sibelius's melody is stamped with a character of its own, derivable from the folk-song and the *rune*, and that in the earlier work, where the national tendency is more apparent, the invariable and primitive character of the rune rhythm, influences the melody and lends a certain amount of monotony without depriving it of charm.

The Russians, who, at various times, have forbidden any books to be printed in Finnish, except religious and purely educational works, who have forbidden the singing of the National Anthem, the offering of a reverential tribute to the memory of their own Tsar, Alexander II, the delivery of lectures on the native language and literature and almost everything that makes for the elevation of a people, did not forget to forbid, at one time, the performance of *Finlandia*.

There is a general impression that the melodies heard in this work are genuine native ones, but Miss Newmarch says: "Sibelius avoids the crude material of the folk-song . . . but he is so penetrated by the spirit of his race that he can evolve a national melody calculated to deceive the elect. On this point the composer is emphatic. 'There is a mistaken impression among the press abroad,' he has assured me, 'that my themes are often folk-melodies. So far I have never used a theme that was not of my own invention. Thus the thematic material of *Finlandia* and *En Saga* is entirely my own.' "

All the new Finnish music, whatever its form or subject,

¹ This little book, price 1s., Breitkopf and Härtel, contains a careful examination of much of Sibelius's work and should prove of great interest to the reader with musical tastes.

possesses much originality and beauty. To understand and appreciate it to the full, however, it is necessary to understand something of the legends and the land of its birth. To those so endowed, it appears to be the result of real inspiration, original despite the foreign education of most of the composers, and characteristic of the fearless, living, independent souls, that have produced it. It has in it, something of the stirring winds of the north, of the magic of the white night, and the mystery of the dark forest. It speaks to the rest of the world of the love of the Finns for the great forces of Nature; it expresses the heroism with which they have striven and are striving for the preservation of their vigorous nationality, and if there be in it more of sadness than of joy, it is, in this, but a re-telling of their history, a reminder of their fateful and unhappy past.

CHAPTER XVI

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

THOUGH the works of the younger Finnish painters are well known on the Continent and are to be found in the State galleries of most of the European capitals it is rare to find one in this country or for the matter of that, to find even artists who are familiar with the products of the most northerly of the European schools of painting. The widespread distribution of Finnish work, extending as it does from Stockholm to Bucharest, may be accepted as indicating that it is worth a better knowledge than we at present possess; and the directors of those exhibitions in London, which have had as their object the extension of the knowledge of foreign art amongst our own somewhat unappreciative people, would find that an exhibition of Finnish art would not be the least interesting of the many educational exhibits with which we have at different times been delighted and instructed.

We have not, in this chapter, to deal with any form of art-work of the time of the people of the legends. The *Kalevala* has nothing to say of men who built beautiful buildings or charmed their fellow-countrymen with the products of the artist's brush or the sculptor's chisel.

Finland is a poor country and needed many things before she could afford the luxury of pictures. It is also a country far removed from the ordinary stream of the great movements of modern progress. Its history

has been full of shadows—political troubles, famine, fire and plague. It is, indeed, wonderful that, amongst all the miseries that she has suffered, she has made any intellectual progress at all, and it could not have been counted unto her for shame if art of any kind had found no place whatever amongst the multitude of more pressing affairs to which she was forced, by circumstances, to devote her attention. And even when there were found amongst her sons, some whose natural talents demanded the brush and the chisel for their due expression, it was only in a foreign land that they could study, and the result to be expected was obviously only one of imitation.

And yet the chief feature of the work about which we are writing is not imitation but originality. While the artists have been trained in the schools of France and Germany it is not either French or German art that is exhibited on the walls of the Finnish picture galleries. The young men who are the children and the creators of the Finnish Renaissance have shown a strong wish not only to play their parts in the developments of modern times, but to play those parts in their own way. They possess, to a remarkable degree, a species of well-warranted audacity. They have set out to march along a path of their own devising, and if some of their first steps are, at times, faltering ones, it must charitably be born in mind that they have no traditions to guide them except those of other lands, and that these they refuse slavishly to follow. Again, they are all young men, not only in spirits but in years. On looking through a catalogue of an exhibition of Finnish work held in Helsingfors in 1908, I was struck by the fact that few of the exhibitors

were over fifty while the majority were well under forty. With a kind of pride in their achievements, each artist gave the date of his birth as well as the number and the title of his picture. The greatest of the Finnish painters is Edelfelt, and he died in 1905 at the age of fifty-one. He has been followed by a number of still younger men, most of whom are well known and sincerely appreciated in Paris. There were exhibitions of Finnish art at the Paris Exhibitions of 1889 and 1900, which awakened in the French critics warm admiration for the sentiments and the technique of the northern painters. It was recognised by them as something fresh, cool and vigorous, the work of an energetic, sturdy, courageous race, and undiluted with "the scintillating degeneracy of the New Art which has grown to be but little more than a mass of embroidery on a twisted, rotten warp."

One seeks for some explanation of the sudden rise of so much excellent work, and one finds it in a deliberate attempt on the part of a few men, who undertook the task of awakening and then directing the feeling for art amongst their fellow-countrymen. In 1846 the *Finnish Art Union* was formed by a small band of enthusiasts, with the express purpose of encouraging and developing native art talent, though there must have been in the minds of many who watched the effort some doubt as to whether there was any art talent to develop, for few signs of originality in this direction had as yet shown themselves. There was no public collection of pictures and there were few private collections of any real value. There was also, as far as one could tell, no public interest in any form of plastic art, and public opinion generally vented itself in scepticism or scoffing. This

was in 1846, not yet seventy years ago. The foundation of the Art Union marks an epoch in the history of Finnish art, or perhaps it would be a better way of expressing the facts if we said that its history is the history of Finnish art. By special sacrifices of time and money, it first raised and then preserved some interest in the matter amongst the general public. It bought pictures and then disposed of them by lottery. In this way the artists were encouraged, for a market was found for their work, and the general public got some idea of what a good picture might look like. An Art School was opened in Helsingfors; public exhibitions were instituted and the foundations of a national art collection were laid. The Art Union faithfully did all it could to render financial assistance and support to any person or movement that seemed likely to help in the achievement of its objects, but lack of funds severely hampered its effectiveness. Such a body of idealists as those who founded the Art Union was probably never gathered together before. Out of an apparent void they set to work to create Finnish art, much as one would set to work to build a house or plant a garden. With a consistency and energy that has never wavered they have pursued their objects, and in half a century the results are in all the chief galleries of Europe except our own, and the ordinary Finnish "man in the street" would make many of our critics blush by his close knowledge of the art of painting. Even the young men and maidens seem to be endowed with a critical art faculty of no mean order. At first, the founders of the Union were regarded as unpractical æsthetics, and when challenged as to the probability of their efforts ever meeting with any success, they them-

selves were forced to confess that there did not exist any artistic culture amongst their own people, sufficient to give them any hope of ever founding either a school of painters or an audience for their works, even if the painters were miraculously produced. Two ideas, however, were at the bottom of the minds of these men: first of all they had a profound belief in the value of art as a means of civilisation; and secondly, they saw in the possible development of a native school of painting, another potent force for the development and preservation of that vigorous nationality which was with most of the men of their time almost a species of fanaticism.

And, as has so often happened, it is the dreamers who have proved the prophets, the men of ideas who have become the inspirers of ideas.

It is usual in books on Finland to devote some space to the work of the founders of the Union, but unless the traveller is interested in the history of art and in that of Finland in particular, we imagine that he will not be very much interested in the efforts of the fathers of Finnish art. Their work is in no way characteristic of the country, and exhibits no qualities that raise it out of the distinctly mediocre. The work that attracts attention and makes one wonder where some of it was born is, as we have already remarked, that of very young men, most of whom are alive and active at the present day.

Passing over, then, the earlier workers who gained their tuition in the ateliers of Rome and Düsseldorf, we come to Edelfelt, who was born in 1854 and died in 1905. He studied at Antwerp and then at Paris, and in the latter city he made his first appearance at the Salon with a

picture entitled *Queen Blanche*. There is a poetic charm about this work which has made it a popular favourite even in the face of the competition of his later and more natural work. This was followed by *Duke Charles insulting the Corpse of Claus Fleming*, a large historical painting to which we called attention in an earlier chapter, and which is to be seen in the Athenæum at Helsingfors. His next excursion led him to attempt pictures of the *plein air* school. His representations of peasant life, taken chiefly from the Nyland shores, became his speciality in the art world of Paris. Three of the pictures painted while he was under the influence of Bastien Lepage, were *Church Service on an Island in Nyland*, now in the Luxembourg Gallery in Paris; *On the Sea*, now in the Fürstenberg collection at Gothenburg, and *Saturday Evening*, now in the Royal Collection at Copenhagen. Next he turned his attention to *genre* painting and here he won an equally great success. Then came the period of the portraits of his mother, Pasteur in his laboratory, and of many people in St. Petersburg, Paris and Stockholm. There is scarcely any branch of painting that Edelfelt has not attempted, and not one in which he has failed. Amongst his later work were two of a religious type, both of which were hung in the Salon. In *Christmas Eve* he represents the Virgin Mary as a young Finnish peasant woman, and in *Christ and the Magdalene* the repentant sinner is a peasant girl from Karelen, and the Saviour at whose feet she prostrates herself is a simple shepherd on the shores of one of the lakes of his native land. This tendency to modernise his subjects, to paint the past as if it were of the present, is strikingly shown in the great mural painting in the University which repre-

sents the procession at the opening of the first University of Åbo. In the foreground goes the governor, Per Brahe, but all the other figures are the men of Edelfelt's own day, the men who would have been in the procession if they had been alive at that time. And first in the long column of brightly robed figures comes one in cocked hat and orange cloak who is none other than Sibelius. Edelfelt himself is also "in the picture," and the good citizens of Helsingfors are always pleased to point out, to the spectator from another land, the various contemporaries who are represented as having performed their several functions a few centuries ago. Besides the large and serious works which have won for the artist a world-wide renown there are many others, of subjects treated in a lighter style and in all possible forms of medium—oil, water-colour and pastel.

In training and sympathy Edelfelt is French rather than Finnish, and yet he had wonderful sympathy with the people of his own land. He knew their poverty, felt their hardships, and understood their aims, and all these facts find due expression in one or other of the many canvases in which he portrayed the various aspects of their lives. He was an experienced and cultivated technician and had a sure eye for the possibilities of a *motif*. He was, until the time of his death, the chief factor in the work of guiding the Finnish people into a proper appreciation of the artistic quality of works of art. His sincerity, his ability, and his sympathy for his own folk won for him, as in the case of Runeberg, an admiration and a love, which are not the heritage of the merely clever or fashionable painter. His death was a national loss and the people grieved as one man when the

tidings that he was no more were spread throughout the land. Younger than Edelfelt and far more truly national are the three Impressionists: Westerholm, Järnefelt and Gallén.

Westerholm is a landscape painter who, after learning the conventions of Düsseldorf, set to work to unlearn all the tricks of the studio and to study the representation of air, light and colour. Järnefelt is much more of a colourist than most of his contemporaries and also more introspective, as will be readily seen in the picture *Sved*, reproduced in this volume (p. 82), but not to be thoroughly appreciated except in the original. The red glow of the fire and the purple shadows that are cast athwart the smoke are all lost in the black and white reproduction so that it is impossible to recognise the pathos of the scene. The gloom that overshadows the lives of peasants who knew no other method of tilling the ground than this, their hopeless struggle with the forest and the rocks, their patience and suffering, seem to require the colours of the artist's brush for their proper realisation.

Gallén-Kallela¹ is gifted with a peculiarly individual cast of mind. He is the Radical of Finnish art, the most advanced representative of realism. Deep down in his heart is the mystery of the forest, the charm of the nightless summer. Had he lived in the days of Väinämöinen he would have been of the company of the heroes. His pictures are full of life and colour, and when he finds the colours of the palette and the lines of the draughtsman insufficient for the expression of his emotions he revels in symbolic means, often of so elaborate a nature that one feels the need of an interpreter to unravel the

¹ Usually known as Gallén.

meaning. He is afraid of nothing, neither ugliness nor disease. If he paints an unpleasant subject he makes no attempt to hide the unpleasantness. He understands the sorrows of his people with the sympathy of a poet, but he expresses them with the brutality of a butcher. His pictures of peasant life are full of colourless want, of depression, of joyless existence, of weariness and hopelessness. In the *Kalevala* he has found many a subject suitable for his genius, and in the Athenæum there are four or five large canvases all of which will attract the attention of the most casual visitor by their beauty of colour and their originality of design. He has recently returned from Africa, and the art world of his own land and of Paris is curiously expectant as to the result of his visit. It will be a new Africa that we shall see when Gallén interprets it, but what will be its effect upon his mystical nature it would be difficult to forecast.

Rissanen, another ultra-modern, is definitely violent and brutal and paints common scenes and people with great force. There is nothing in his work of idealism or gentleness. His canvases glow with a love of the colour and the artistic possibilities that his subjects afford, but he has no sentiment and perhaps no hope. He is the pessimist of the brush. He has definiteness of technique and force of feeling and his aim is to represent real things and real people untinged with any redeeming glow of imagination.

Naturally enough, in so poor a country the art of sculpture was of slower growth than the sister art of painting. Though it may be heresy to say it, I do not care much for the three first of Finnish sculptors who won a reputation. Runeberg, the son of the poet, seems

to me to be merely conventional and to be without inspiration. It is not till we reach the impressionists in stone that the Finnish sculptor appears to rise to any height of distinction.

Two men, Stigell and Vallgren, have been much longer in winning popular recognition than Runeberg, but their work is of far more original and distinctive character. Stigell first studied in Rome and later in Paris. His work is characterised by great strength, by a realism that verges upon brutality, but which holds the spectator and forces him to wonder, in a way that is never produced by the colder and more conventionally correct work of his predecessors. He is in stone what Gallén is on canvas. His most famous work is the glorious group *The Shipwrecked*, exhibited in the Salon in 1891 and now placed on the Observatory Hill in Helsingfors, where it never fails to attract both nursemaids and children, artisans and peasants, artists and savants. Its universal appeal, to the art world of Paris and to the children of Helsingfors, is a sure and certain sign of the possession of power. Vallgren is, like Edelfelt, more French than Finnish and now lives entirely in Paris. He has carved and modelled pretty well everything from sepulchral urns to monumental groups, but is perhaps best known by the Head of Christ Crucified, copies of which have found their way into many homes in different parts of the world.

Emil Vikström must be added to the list of modern sculptors whose work claims attention. He is responsible for the statue of Lonrot, also for the frieze in the tympanum of the House of the Diet, both in Helsingfors. The frieze represents the Emperor Alexander I granting

constitutional rights to Finland at the Diet of Borgå in 1809. At the time when the group was finished and ready for the unveiling ceremony the Tsar and his advisers were making one of their attacks on the Finnish constitution. The contrast between their promises and their fidelity in keeping them was so great that the public unveiling of the frieze which recalled the sacred promise of Alexander was deemed inadvisable, and the ceremony that should have taken place was dispensed with.

Modern Finnish architecture is a fascinating study because no two people ever have the same idea as to what it is worth or what it all means. There are a number of classic buildings in Helsingfors, churches, senate houses, libraries and other public buildings which are the work of Engel, the Christopher Wren of the city, or of his pupils. But these, beautiful as many of them are, possess nothing that is distinctly of the land where they have been erected, and so may be passed over without further notice. In a few places there are castles of Swedish construction, built as fortresses, not as residences, and therefore more noteworthy for their strength than their beauty. Like the classic edifices of Engel we may give them but scant attention unless we are skilled in the art of building.

There was little call for originality in architecture in a land where everything was of wood and liable to destruction by fire. In fact the fires have been so frequent and so disastrous, that it is permissible to doubt whether there be in Helsingfors any building more than a hundred years old. But as the capital has increased in size and importance, wooden buildings have been,



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FINNISH DOORWAYS



TO THE
LIBRARY

or are gradually being, replaced with others of stone. In the city itself the law now forbids the erection of wooden buildings. On the outskirts the upper storey of a two-storey house may, however, be of wood. Now the cheapest and the commonest building material is granite, but granite imposes certain restrictions on the builder, inasmuch as it is a difficult stone to carve. Hence we get in the newer buildings, the ones about which there is so much discussion two main ideas. In the first place the architect tries to get his effects by spacing and massing, and in the second he reserves his decorative effects for the doorways and windows. A certain kind of picturesqueness is aimed at in private as well as in public buildings, and we get imaginative and original effects lacking all calmness or attention to rules. Straight lines are broken up in the most extraordinary manner, projecting gables, turrets and windows are used to abolish the monotony of expansive flat walls; decorative details of frogs and spiders, carrots and swans, are strewn about with a recklessness and profusion that is sometimes comical, sometimes impressive, and always thought-compelling. Without a mass of photographs it is difficult to convey to the reader any idea of the curious character of this modern work. One man calls it *Hideous*, another *Lovely*. The choice of the epithet probably depends on your education, your prejudices, and your ability to seek sympathetically for the meaning of the builder. It falls into no category of known styles; hence if you be but of the schools it will probably appal you. To me it is an intense joy, even when it is ugliest and least effective: for it is daring. It is only a man of courage who dares to do the

things that these men do. It is full of the spirit of youth. And though it be not Gothic, nor Moorish, nor anything but Finnish, I could wander all day amongst the houses and streets where it is prevalent, feeling as though I were once more in the presence of an age when men dared to be original in defiance of all accepted traditions. If it be ugly, so be it. Whatever it be, time alone will judge, for the conventions of to-day are the anathemas of to-morrow. But one thing is certain, that if the love of the grotesque and the massive persist for another fifty years, it will be worth while taking a trip to Finland for the purpose of seeing the buildings so curious that no municipalised tape-bound official of our Motherland would stand them for a day. As I rested beside the new church at Tammerfors and looked at the wall that surrounded it, I wondered what a village parson would say if one suggested to him such a boundary for his place of worship. For this wall is nothing but a series of young boulders, naked and unashamed, unpolished and untrimmed just as they came from the ground, and piled one on top of the other as if built by children, and yet, in the very simplicity and strength of these stones there is something eloquently suggestive of the foundations of the faith in whose honour the temple was erected. Is that, perhaps, the meaning of the wall?

Inside there is a gallery upheld by enormous granite piers that seem out of all proportion to the weight they have to support. Round the gallery is a frieze—naked boys bearing a wreath of roses and thorns that symbolises the burden of life. Behind the communion table a fresco represents the Resurrection morning and in one of the aisles a perfectly hideous piece of symbolism figures for



FRESCO, ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, TAMMERFORS



"THE BURDEN OF LIFE"

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TO VIM! ANSWERED

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA



GRANITE PIER, ST. JOHN'S CHURCH,
TAMMERFORS



"THE GARDEN OF DEATH"

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us the Garden of Death. There is nothing religious or reverential in some of these pictures, despite their subject. They would not be out of place in a Concert Hall—and the one of the Garden of Death is so frankly crude and hideous that one wonders whether the artist has not been having a huge joke—a joke of a kind that will be best appreciated by remembering the story of the wicked thieves who persuaded the Brahmin that his sheep was a pig.

CHAPTER XVII

SPORT AND AMUSEMENT

SPORT of some kind or another can be pursued throughout the whole year. It varies in character from pearl-fishing to bear-shooting, and includes interesting seal-hunting, salmon and trout fishing in swirling, foam-crested rapids, journeys in open rowing boats down boiling, roaring torrents, and yachting amongst the thousands of wooded flower-strewn islands that make the Finnish archipelago a never-ending delight.

If we had to single out any one form of sport as the national one we should probably award that distinction to *ski-ing*, for the *ski* is often the only possible means of travelling in winter over the extensive tracts of deep unsullied snow. The ski is a Finnish invention and was known here many years before it was introduced into Norway.

But one of the sports which is rapidly increasing in favour is that of "bringing the bears to the ground." In autumn, when the first snows begin to fall, heralding the approach of the long dark winter, the bears select camping grounds for themselves where they can sleep peacefully till the springtime comes again. The male and the female select separate habitations, and if there be any young they sleep with the mother. A great deal of care and attention is bestowed upon the selection of the lair or "*ide*" as it is called locally, and Bruin roams

about, looking at various apartments with a critical eye as to their appropriateness for a long period of somnolence. Having once made his choice he flings himself down in the freshly fallen snow, curls himself up for his long nap, and is perfectly oblivious of any further snow showers that Nature may see fit to bestow about his resting-place. He is often completely snowed up, and it frequently happens that he is surrounded by snow several feet deep. His warm breath then keeps clear a small opening which leads upwards through the snow, and out of which the steam from his breath escapes, like smoke from a chimney. If the bear be disturbed and driven from such comfortable quarters, he makes no attempt to dig out another hollow in the snow in some other place, but he breaks off a number of branches from the fir-trees and makes a bed called a "korgide" or "basket-bed," upon which he lies down and again seeks repose.

At the beginning of the winter, peasants who are skilled hunters go out into the woods and look for traces of the bear. If they find that the track of a bear disappears in a thicket, they do not follow the animal, but they make a wide circuit of the whole place. If no tracks lead out of the thicket the assumption is that there is a bear inside. The whole circumference is then re-surveyed until the assumption becomes a certainty, and then preparations are made for the future of the bear. The observations are continued by day and night until the time of hunting comes round.

The discoverer of the lair has certain duties and certain privileges. On the first day after he has completed the circumference of the suspected area he gives notice to

the ranger of the district and also to the minister of his parish. On the following Sunday, the parson announces from the pulpit that peasant "A" has found a "ring" in a certain neighbourhood, and it is not to be interfered with. Finnish law makes special provision for the punishment of any person who neglects the clergyman's warning. In the meantime the ranger has sent notice of the find to certain sporting clubs, to distinguished sportsmen, and to the Tourist Association in Helsingfors, and has offered the "ring" for sale. The cost of a licence to shoot in this "ring" varies from £15 to £25, according to the number of "rings" available. In 1910 there were about twelve of them in the neighbourhood of Sortavala alone, and the licence for each was £20. Lest any peasant should be tempted into acts of trickery, this money is not paid until a later date when the hunt takes place and the bear is actually driven out. A portion of the sum, generally one-half, has usually to be deposited as a sign of good faith on the part of the sportsman, but this is returned to him if no bear be found in the "ring." It very rarely happens that the sportsman is disappointed, as the peasants are keen both in tracking the bear and also in keeping it under subsequent observation. Occasionally, however, the bear gets frightened by dogs or disturbed by excessively bad weather, and quits the "ring" unperceived. As soon as the peasant discovers that the bear has gone, he follows the trail and eventually "rings" in poor Bruin again.

The best time for shooting is early in March. The person who has purchased a "ring" is advised—especially if he be a foreigner—to go direct to Helsingfors and there to call upon the Finnish Tourist Association, where, at

the present time, the whole of the bear-hunting in Finland is organised. Here a guide and an interpreter can be engaged. The men ask fifteen marks a day (the mark is worth tenpence) and all their travelling expenses. The party proceeds by rail to Sortavala at the head of Lake Ladoga, where an exceedingly comfortable hotel is to be found. From Sortavala the rest of the journey is made by sleigh, though it is possible to travel on horseback. The district of Suojärvi, where the bears are most numerous, lies to the east, and is usually reached in one night's travelling. The huntsman is provided with an abundance of rugs, and he lies as warm and comfortable amongst these as in the warmest of feather beds. On he goes through the night, the bright stars above him, the pure white snows around him, and when he arrives in the early morning at the scene of the shooting he is probably quite sorry that the fascinating journey has been so rapidly accomplished.

After he has taken a good breakfast in company with the peasants and has seen that the dogs and the beaters are all ready, the hunt begins. Under the guidance of the local huntsmen the party reaches the purchased "ring." The bear is routed out, either by the hunters or the dogs, and, as a rule, he makes straight for the hunter as though anxious to retaliate immediately and effectively upon the one who has been mainly responsible for disturbing his nap. If, however, the bear prefers to make a raid upon the beaters, the latter allow him to come close up to them and then, at a prearranged signal, they utter a loud cry which so frightens the bear that he turns his attention to the huntsman, who aims near the shoulder-blades. He obviously prefers not to touch the

head, as this would spoil the trophy that is to signalise and perpetuate his skill.

Fighting with these bears is considered to be of great interest, as there is plenty of excitement when the savage beast makes a dead set at the man with the gun. Few Englishmen are likely to adopt the methods of an Italian Count who, some years ago, purchased one of the "rings." He refused to have the bear routed out, but went gingerly up to the "ide," stuck his gun down the aperture, and fired at the bear as he lay asleep under the snow.

If the bear is brought down, the beaters join together in a quaint national dance to the sound of their own weird and lusty singing. Healths are quaffed in brandy that has been brought along for the occasion, there is laughter and shouting, and the successful sportsman will not lack joyful companions. Then the fore-legs and the hind-legs of the beast are tied together and, hanging upon a pole, home goes conquered Bruin. If any young cubs are found with the mother in the "ide" they are packed away in a sack which is slung on a pole, and in this way they, too, join in the hunter's triumphal procession.

In Viborg and other towns it is not uncommon to see young bears which have been caught in this manner acting as playmates for the children and running at large in the gardens and on the hills.

The cost of a bear-hunt is a fairly high one, but it is highly exhilarating, and owing to the scarcity of bears, not a very common one.

The corresponding summer sport is elk-hunting. The elk can only be hunted for eight days, from September 1 to September 8. At one time it was preserved as

royal game, and for years after kings had ceased to take advantage of this special privilege no one else was allowed to take their place. As a consequence the animals increased in numbers to such an extent as to become a positive nuisance. When food was not available in the forests they made their way to the ricks in the farmyards and helped themselves. The Government had to pay for all the damage done and in some years the cost was considerable. "Moreover," says Mr. Goodyear, "the law as it then stood was apt to lead to absurd situations. For instance, two dogs had run loose into the woods, and were worrying an elk, which they eventually drove on to a rock overhanging the waters of a lake. Thence it endeavoured to leap down, and in so doing broke its leg. The dogs naturally continued to assail it in the water, and in this situation all three were discovered. But nothing could be done to put the elk out of its pain until an officer had been sent for and had given the necessary authority. However, in various ways such anomalies have been removed, and, in particular, organised elk-hunts are now permitted during the first eight days in September. Only the bulls are killed, and sportsmen intending to shoot elk have to give notice of their intention to the governor of the province before August 1, enclosing a statement of the number of heads to which they will limit their bag. If the number suggested seems excessive for the size and value of the shooting, the governor may at his discretion reduce it to a lower figure. Accordingly the new facilities cannot result in a shrinkage of the range of distribution of the elk in Finland."

But above all Finland is the fisher's paradise, the

heaven of anglers. There are 110 species of fish, 66 of which live in salt water, 31 in fresh and 13 in both, the limits being undecided in many cases on account of the very slight salinity of the sea-water.

Probably more English visit the interior of Finland for the purpose of fishing than for any other reason, and here and there, in the most outlandish places, one will find some devotee of the rod who has temporarily forsaken the lochs and rivers of Scotland for sport under new and less ordinary surroundings. Fishing is allowed everywhere, but for trout and salmon permission has to be obtained from the owners, mostly peasants, who are usually ready to grant it, either gratuitously or for a trifling sum. Boats and men can easily be hired at from three to four shillings a day.

As a rule, the streams of the interior, in the east and north especially, are more abundant in fish, and here a licence to try one's luck will be obtained more easily; but, at the same time, the further the angler goes from the more frequented places of resort, the more the claims for luxurious living must be reduced, though the hospitality of the peasants is a never-failing refuge for those in momentary distress.

The best river for salmon-fishing is considered to be the Uleå,¹ and the angler has the opportunity, when his sport is over, of descending to the coast along the rapids that have been described in an earlier part of this book. This river abounds in grayling and trout, perch and bream, roach and pike. The largest trout ever caught

¹ In recent years anglers complain that salmon are netted to such an extent at the mouth of the river, that few are to be caught in the neighbourhood of Vaala.



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FISHING THROUGH HOLES IN THE ICE

THE NEW ALPHABET

with a rod weighed thirteen pounds, and the largest grayling four and a half pounds. At Kajana you can fish from the land, though wading is useful. There is a clean and comfortable little hotel, where a bedroom can be had for two shillings a day and where the other charges are in the same proportion. For about six shillings a day you can live like a king.

Fifty miles from Kajana is Vaala, renowned for salmon and trout fishing. Here most of the fishing is done from boats. The accommodation is not luxurious, but the beds are clean and comfortable and the food plentiful and wholesome. There is always some one in these places who can speak English and is willing to help the visitor to get all that he needs. At Kajana Mr. Herman Renfors has for years been the counsellor and friend of every one who chooses to ask his advice. At Vaala Captain Spolander performs a similar useful function. In fact, the traveller in this country has scarcely to look for friends. He is a stranger and they take him at once to their hearts, and try all in their power to see that he carries away nothing but the kindest impressions of Finland and her people.

Those who wish still more outlandish places can go to the Lieska River in Russian Karelia. To get there you first take a train journey of nineteen hours, then drive for another twenty-two. Next follows a fresh drive of five miles and then a further five in a boat. Finally there is a walk or drive of about six miles before you can throw the line. But it is worth all the trouble. There is no need to ask for permission to fish, and board and lodging can be had for less than two shillings a day. The man who is not accustomed to simple fare is advised to take

with him a supply of tinned meats in order to vary the monotony of the peasants' diet. Anglers who may be thinking of a holiday in such lonely but charming surroundings should, like the bear-hunters, call at the Tourist Society's Bureau in Helsingfors. The attention and help they will get will be a revelation to most of them in the way of courtesy and kindness.

There is yachting, canoeing, swimming and every variety of sport that require the presence of water in abundance.

As to cycling, opinions differ. Without some knowledge of the language, wheeling in the remote interior is almost impossible. Accommodation is limited, the roads in places are very bad, and the distances from place to place are often very great. Finland has charms of her own in abundance, but they are to be found by travelling as the natives do, and that is by water. Here there is the finest air, the brightest sunshine, the bluest lakes and the darkest of forests. What do you want with a bicycle pump and a repairing outfit ?

CHAPTER XVIII

RECENT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC MOVEMENTS

FINLAND has indulged in many social and political experiments, including the admission of women to Parliament, drastic regulations affecting the liquor traffic, with a proposition (vetoed by the Tsar) for its total abolition, and marriage by contract without the formalities required either by Church or State.

Of the many movements that have characterised this independent and progressive people during the last twenty years we propose to deal with three.

The Co-operative Movement.

First and foremost is the development of co-operative enterprise. In other countries co-operative businesses have been largely local and due to individual initiative. But Finland does not go to work after this manner. She does not find her way through experience to theory, but sits down solidly to consider a subject in all its bearings and to devise a scheme that shall fit the country. She collects the results of similar movements in other lands, considers their application to her own circumstances and then devises a scheme complete in every detail. Hence in 1899 a few people met to consider the possibility of co-operation in business as a means of developing the feeling of nationality that was again springing up with renewed force in consequence of the political troubles.

Their deliberations resulted in propaganda work to spread the co-operative idea and make it familiar in all its bearings. The work was controlled by the central society known as Pellervo. It had no funds with which to undertake the campaign, but as soon as the value of its work was understood private individuals came forward and money was soon available.

Pellervo is now a valuable force in Finnish life. Its work is still, as it was at first, purely educational. It exists solely for the purpose of spreading ideas. To this end it has established a college in Helsingfors where teachers are trained, whose business it is to go out all over the land and explain to the people the methods of conducting co-operative businesses, and to encourage them to establish such businesses amongst themselves. Its course of training is a thoroughly practical one, and its apostles are well equipped with a knowledge of book-keeping and of the commercial methods applicable to the movement which it is their aim to spread. The society works for the spreading of an idea, to create the right methods of successful enterprise under the varying conditions found in different parts of the country, to encourage the formation of co-operative businesses in special areas, to give the best advice as to their founding and management, to collect and publish statistics, and to forward the interests of the movement in the press wherever and whenever possible.

It issues a paper called *Pellervo*, which finds its way month by month into almost every cottage in the land, and its leader, Professor Gebhard, has published an atlas of social, economic and allied statistics which is a model of what such a work should be like, both in its aim and

execution. One year after its formation it received a grant from the Diet of about £800. This was raised in 1905 to over £2000, with an additional grant of about £400 towards its literary publications. In 1908 it received, in addition to these subsidies, an income of about £2400 as the result of its own activities. These are small sums with which to initiate and carry on a movement affecting the life of a whole nation, but the spirit in which the work is undertaken and the loyal co-operation of all who are interested in the fate of the land has made the results altogether out of proportion to the amounts expended. Within ten years of the foundation of Pellervo there were in existence 1816 different businesses, 354 dairies, 384 banks, 506 retail shops and 568 other forms of activity.

To establish these businesses required capital quite beyond the resources of an educational society like Pellervo. Assistance was rendered by the Diet with a loan of 4,000,000 marks and an annual subsidy of 20,000 marks for ten years. In 1909 the success of the movement was so well assured that an appeal was made for a further loan of 5,000,000 marks, but this was refused by Russia, who reduced the loan to a quarter of a million marks. Russia has always been hostile to progressive movements, her attitude in this case, however, being less aggressive than usual because she recognises that the increase in wealth which has resulted from the spread of this form of business means further possibilities in the way of increased taxation.

The business part of the enterprise is in the hands of another central society called Hankkija. This society supplies to the local branches all that they require. It

imports, in bulk, all the articles that are required and sends them out to the places where they are in demand. It makes no profit on its work, as it is established for the good of the community and not for purposes of private profit.

The centralised control exercised by Pellervo and Hankkija is not allowed to paralyse either local effort or interest. In different parts of the country, special smaller and secondary centres are established. These consider the specific requirements of their own area and publish papers and pamphlets dealing with purely local questions. They are the medium of communication between the shopkeepers and dairy proprietors in the country districts and the central bodies in the capital. Such a highly organised yet simple form of co-operative enterprise would never have been possible had it come into being as the result of isolated and interested individuals in widely separated and unrelated districts. It was conceived as a big whole, the details having all been settled before the work was undertaken. This method of setting about a question is a marked feature of Finnish character.

The most important branch of the work as it affects the individual has been the development of co-operative dairies, not only on account of its economic value but because of its effect on the peasant character. Before the initiation of the movement the peasants lived a hand-to-mouth existence. They had never any certainty of disposing of their produce; calculation of annual revenue was impossible and waste was everywhere prevalent. Now a steady sale is assured for all milk; the possibility of forming an annual farm or domestic budget has become

practicable, and the effect in developing habits of foresight and economy is stated by competent observers to be almost beyond belief, considering the short time that has elapsed since the preliminary educational propaganda was undertaken.

In every district there is a central dairy to which milk is sent. It is collected by the peasants in turn, one man taking on the duty of transport one day and another the next, and so on. In this way the cost of transport is minimised and the time of the individual peasant saved. A spirit of mutual help is engendered, and the economic results of the movement are rendered strikingly apparent to any who may feel inclined to pursue the old and wasteful methods of the past. At the dairies each quantity of milk is registered, and afterwards the quantity of butter which it has yielded. Settlement is made at the end of every month, and a more or less regular income thus provided.

With that practical spirit which marks the doings of the people in certain directions, the central dairy is usually situated near to a post-office, and the man who takes the milk collects the letters and delivers them to his neighbours. The houses are too scattered in many places to permit of the State undertaking a daily postal delivery.

The Society for Home Research.

So far as I know nothing quite like the Society for Home Research exists in any other land. Its object is to get the people to make a thorough study of their own country. Each person is supposed, as far as in him lies, to make a detailed study of his own immediate neighbour-

hood, and the interesting thing is, that the work is not confined to the scholar and the professor, but is undertaken by labourers and peasants as well. What this means may be best understood by imagining the British agricultural labourer being asked to help in a great educational movement, being requested to take part in the collection of scientific and historical data of all kinds. It is safe to predict that the appeal would meet with little or no response, in fact that the poorer inhabitants of our villages would be both incapable of understanding the aims of such a movement or of rendering any assistance.

The Home Research movement really began with the founding of an Historical Museum at Åbo in the year 1881. This museum collected relics of the past of every possible description. The example of Åbo was rapidly followed and soon there were many such institutions. The idea of enlisting the co-operation of all classes was due to a rector at the village of Lojo, and gave birth to the Home Research Society in 1894. Progress was slow till 1899, when the political troubles gave it a new impetus. Since that date its work has grown rapidly and there are branches and members all over the land.

The work is principally divided amongst the following departments: Meteorology, Hydrography, Orography, Geology, Flora, Fauna, Archæology, History, Folk-lore, History of Art, and includes the collection of various statistical information as to the condition of every village and district. The students of the University and other young people have taken up the matter with the greatest enthusiasm, and their example has been followed by all who profess any interest in their own land. Thousands

of photographs have been taken of everything curious or typical in the landscape, or of buildings likely to be some day non-existent. Furniture, cottages, ancient customs, are now preserved in a photographic record on a scale probably never contemplated by any other country. The peasants help with details as to their own farms or homesteads, supplying information as to the extent of their holdings, the number and value of their stock, their hours of work, and so on. One peasant, long before the society was formed, had taken the dates for fifty years of the times when the lake in his neighbourhood was frozen over and when it was again ice free, and these details have been found of some importance in later years in connection with investigations as to the climate of the country. Another has supplied details as to the work done in his mill by the rapids that supply the power for his machinery.

All the reports are sent annually to the central office in Helsingfors, where they are dissected, classified and indexed. This central office binds together all the local branches that encourage and superintend the work in the country. It gives advice, collects information, finds people who have been specially trained for investigation or who possess the time and ability to organise the work of others, maintains a library, publishes two journals, a Finnish and a Swedish one, and arranges annual conferences. It is not necessary, but it is usual for people to work in connection with a local society; there is something for everybody to do, no matter how humble, and somebody ready to render help wherever the desire for assistance exists. One can only wonder what would be the effect of such a movement in our own land in providing

intelligent and interesting pursuits for all the members of the community, especially in country places.

It would appear that much of the information sent to the central bureau is not of immediate practical importance, but it is not rejected on that account, and amongst the mass of details and statistics provided, there is always the raw material for all the learned societies of the land, whenever they are called upon to undertake any kind of special investigation. The collection of knowledge which has apparently no practical value is common in Finland. The people are essentially dreamy, and despite all we have said, not over practical in these matters. They are not given to asking "What is the use of it all?" The organisation and direction of the work so as to extract any definite value from it, has had to be done by the more enlightened and educated sections of the community. Still, the desire to help exists, and that is the main thing. The effect in stimulating a love for the fatherland can only be measured by those who are conversant with the people.

In connection with this movement one may call attention to the numerous societies that exist for special purposes. The same societies exist in most civilised countries, but in no other land do they make the same universal appeal to the merchant and the scholar, to the wealthy and the poor, because in no other land is education so widely appreciated or so earnestly sought. The Finnish Literary Society owes its vast collections of folk-songs and stories, as much to the interest of the dwellers in remote villages as to the professors in the capital. The Finnish Historical Society, the Scientific Society and the Archæological Society are indebted to willing helpers from the cottage as well as from the school. Much of

this wonderful result is due to the work of the Society for the Education of the People, founded in 1873. The annual subscription to this society is about half-a-crown, and the membership runs into many thousands amongst the poor in the country. The society gives to all its members copies of important works on many subjects that are of interest to them, and sells other books of a less universal appeal at a very small cost.

The Forest Society undertakes the collection and dissemination of information concerning the woodlands that are the chief source of the country's wealth.

The Finnish-Ugrian Society has for its aim the study of linguistic and ethnological questions affecting the history of the race. It sends young men to all parts of the world, wherever Finnish tribes are to be found, to study their habits, superstitions and language. This year, one devoted student has gone to live amongst the Samoyedes and the Ostiaks in order to undertake a series of investigations for which he has been specially trained. Here again there can be no profit; the only inducement to such a career is that of usefulness and service to the motherland.

There are societies for the study of Church History, of Dialects, of Art and of Music. The catalogue is a long one and would present no special interest were it not for the fact that Finland possesses less than four million inhabitants and little money, and that these societies depend upon the mass of the people and not upon a few select scholars for their support and efficiency. All of them have gained new sources of information, new bands of helpers, in those who are welded together in the Society for Home Research.

The Young People's Society.

I do not like the term Young People's Society, but there seems no other equivalent for the Swedish term *Ungdomsförening*. I first came in connection with one of these societies while waiting for a train at a place that possessed very few inhabitants. I had two hours at my disposal and I wandered up a little hill at the back of the station. On this hill I found a large building, of such proportions and solidity that I wondered what purpose it could serve. I went inside and soon discovered a large central hall with a properly equipped stage and scenery. Further investigation revealed a refreshment department, a library, and sundry rooms for recreation. Outside were parallel bars and others forms of gymnastic apparatus. Inquiry led to the information that this building belonged to the Young People's Society.

These societies are widely spread and are of the nature of clubs. Their work is both educational and social. Lectures are given; theatrical performances are presented. They are centres where the young people are brought into touch with leading currents of thought and where Temperance propaganda finds its greatest hope and support. Choral and Orchestral Societies are rarely absent, and dancing, of which the Finns are very fond, is of common occurrence in the winter months.

The society is open to all young people and there are no strict limits of age, but roughly speaking, the members have left school and do not yet consider themselves "grown up." The leaders and the organisers of any centre are of course adults, as the management of institutions on such a scale would be beyond the power of even

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A FINNISH RAPID

[To face p. 308]

TO THE
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Finnish children. There is usually a small subscription, but this is not nearly enough to pay for the cost of such roomy and handsome structures.

It appears that such is the desire to possess these centres of social and educational activity that the work of erection never presents any difficulty. Somebody can always be found who will give the necessary land. The buildings are of wood and in the forests this is plentiful enough. The work is undertaken free of charge, in spare time, by all who can help. The local carpenter, blacksmith or decorator will, when his regular work is over, go gaily to put in a few more hours' labour at the club-room in his neighbourhood, for the place is for his children, and if not for his, then for the children of his neighbour, or shall we say for the children of his fatherland. In this way nothing is paid for labour and it is undertaken by just that class of the community that has least leisure and least wealth. Finally, when the building is finished and the fortunate young people are ready to take possession of their roomy quarters, there is no separation of the sexes on the part of the parents and no levying of rates and taxes on the part of the local authorities.

In these two societies, the Home Research Society and the Young People's Society, cannot the well-wisher find some hint for the solution of the unutterable dullness that hangs over the English village, especially in the winter ?

APPENDIX

Two Finnish societies are of great assistance to those in England who are interested in the country.

I. The Finnish Tourist Society, Norra Esplanadgatan, Helsingfors. This society exists to help the traveller in every possible way, and not for profit.

II. The Anglo-Finnish Society. This was founded in December 1911, to bring together all who are interested in Finland, and to maintain a bureau and library where information can be freely sought and readily granted. The secretary for England is Miss Travers, the author of *Letters from Finland* ; the secretary for Finland is Madame Malmberg. The headquarters of the society are at 77, Holland Park Avenue, W., and the subscription for English people is five shillings per annum.

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